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THE MOORES OF MOORE HALL

By the same author

THE LIFE OF GEORGE MOORE

SWIFT

THE LIFE OF HENRY TONKS

with M. M. Rossi

BISHOP BERKELEY

top: MOORE HALL AFTER THE FIRE OF 1923

bottom: MOORE HALL IN 1898. MAURICE AND EVELYN MOORE ON THE STEPS

THE MOORES OF MOORE HALL

by

JOSEPH HONE

JONATHAN CAPE
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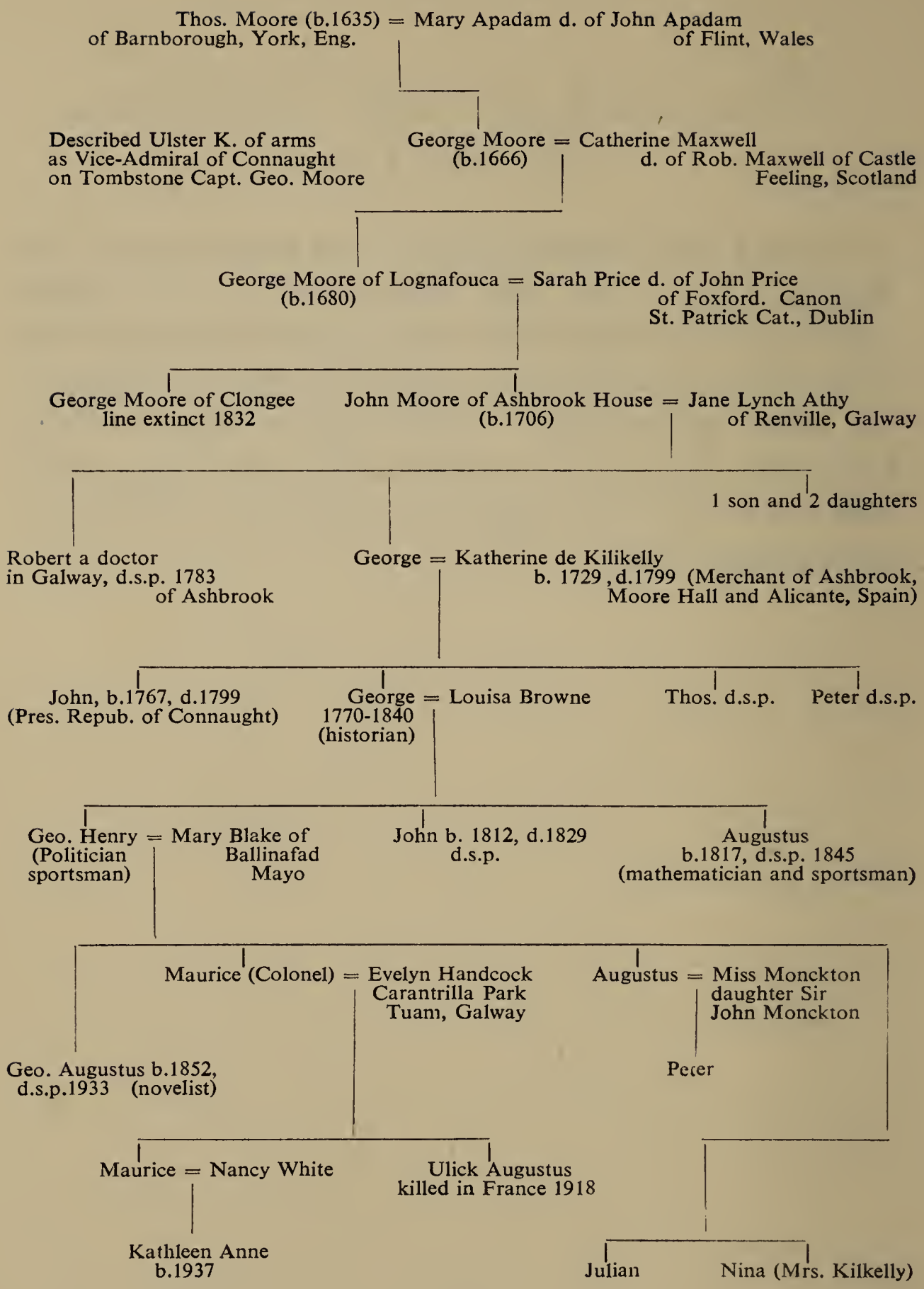
PEDIGREE OF THE MOORES OF MAYO

A LONGER and earlier pedigree was made out by the George Moore who built Moore Hall. It is dated 1770 and the original gives the names of the ancestors both of himself and of his wife Catherine de Killkelly for many generations. The copy at Moore Hall, burned in 1923, was a certified copy on a huge sheet about 6 ft. by 6 ft., signed and sealed by the Knight of Santiago, Spain.

GENEALOGY


Thos. Moore (b.1635) of Barnborough, York, Eng. = Mary Apadam d. of John Apadam of Flint, Wales
Described Ulster K. of arms as Vice-Admiral of Connaught on Tombstone Capt. Geo. Moore
George Moore (b.1666) = Catherine Maxwell d. of Rob. Maxwell of Castle Feeling, Scotland
George Moore of Lognafouca (b.1680) = Sarah Price d. of John Price of Foxford. Canon St. Patrick Cat., Dublin
George Moore of Clongee line extinct 1832
John Moore of Ashbrook House (b.1706) = Jane Lynch Athy of Renville, Galway
1 son and 2 daughters
Robert a doctor in Galway, d.s.p. 1783 of Ashbrook
George = Katherine de Kilikelly b. 1729, d.1799 (Merchant of Ashbrook, Moore Hall and Alicante, Spain)
John, b.1767, d.1799 (Pres. Repub. of Connaught)
George 1770-1840 (historian) = Louisa Browne
Thos. d.s.p.
Peter d.s.p.
Geo. Henry (Politician sportsman) = Mary Blake of Ballinafad Mayo
John b. 1812, d.1829 d.s.p.
Augustus b.1817, d.s.p. 1845 (mathematician and sportsman)
Maurice (Colonel) = Evelyn Handcock Carantrilla Park Tuam, Galway
Augustus = Miss Monckton daughter Sir John Monckton
Geo. Augustus b.1852, d.s.p.1933 (novelist)
Peter
Maurice = Nancy White
Ulick Augustus killed in France 1918
Kathleen Anne b.1937
Julian
Nina (Mrs. Kilkelly)

PREFACE

I HAVE endeavoured to relate in this book the dramatic history of a house and a family. I have also endeavoured to make of the fortunes and misfortunes of the Moores of Mayo (1790-1937) a mirror of the modern history of Ireland.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

George Moore I, founded the fortunes of the family by commerce in Spain and built Moore Hall. Died 1800.

His son John participated in the rebellion of 1798 and died in captivity.

George Moore II of Moore Hall, an historian and political theorist. Died 1840.

His wife Louisa Moore, cousin of first Marquess of Sligo.

George Moore III, famous sportsman and rider, and later leader of the first Home Rule party. Died 1870.

Augustus Moore, brother of above, a mathematician of genius, killed while riding in the Grand National at the age of 28.

Maria Edgeworth, close friend of the family.

George Moore IV of Moore Hall, the famous man of letters. Died 1933.

Maurice Moore, brother of the above, Irish Patriot, inspector of volunteers, and Senator of the Free State, promoter of the agitation against Land Annuities, Senator of Eire, late Colonel in Connaught Rangers. Still living.

In the gathering of the material for this book, I have especially to acknowledge the assistance given me by Mr. Maurice Moore of Wyoming, U.S.A., many of whose reminiscences are incorporated in the later chapters, often in his own words. Others whom I should thank are: Mr. C. D. Medley for permission to quote from the letters and autobiographical writings of the late Mr. George Moore; Mr. Richard Best for his help in the National Library, Dublin, where most of the papers from which I have quoted are deposited; and the editor of the *Irish Press* for permission to incorporate in Chapter XXII a part of Colonel Moore's history of the Irish volunteers.

THE MOORES OF MOORE HALL

CHAPTER I

GEORGE MOORE THE FIRST

When William Barrett, called the fair, embarked upon his invasion of Connaught in the twelfth century, a choice of two routes into the interior lay open to him. He could strike southward passing overland through the great gap between Slieve Lonan and Slieve Cairn, or by water along the three lakes Corrib, Mask and Carra which stretch in almost unbroken continuity northward from Galway bay.

Either of these routes is practicable, and both would lead certainly to the eastern shores of Lough Carra. A desirable position because of its great strategical importance to an invader who wished to penetrate into the rich and fertile plains of south-eastern Mayo.

History is silent as to the Welshman's choice, but the success of his arms is unquestioned. Whichever route he followed, he gained his objective. But there he halted. With all of south-eastern Mayo open to his victorious arms, for some reason long since forgotten, he made no attempt at further advance. Perhaps his numbers were inadequate for extensive conquest. Perhaps the forces of the high-king, Roderick O'Connor, were massed in superiority to dispute his progress. We know not. All that is certain is that he came to the

end of Carra lake; for the ruins of a great island stronghold off the eastern shore stand to this day in testimony of his conquest.

William's party of Welshmen were followed by other Welshmen, the Lynots, the Petits, the Brownes, and these in their turn were superseded by the Normans. And in the course of time the standard of the great barons of this race floated paramount over Welshmen and Irish alike.

Directly opposite the Welshman's island castle a long headland juts southward into the lake, and above the eastern arm is a hill called Muckloon. On this hill the most remarkable of modern Mayo families built their home, Moore Hall, at the end of the eighteenth century.

The Moores were originally from Ashbrook House, near Straid, which place came into their possession by purchase, the title passing from a William Moore of Dublin to a Vice-Admiral of Connaught of William III's time, whose grave may still be discovered with difficulty in the walled cemetery of Templemore, close to Straid Abbey and Ballyvary, Co. Mayo. The Vice-Admiral and the Moores of Dublin, though of the same name, were unrelated; the latter had the property from a Lord Tyrawley to whose family it had been granted during the Cromwellian confiscations. Ashbrook was a small, rather insignificant two-storied house; but it seems to have been adequate to the needs of the Vice-Admiral, so that he and his

descendants were in constant residence there until wealth came into the family.

The few records available give a wild and undisciplined character to these early Moores. There is a record of one of them being rewarded for conspicuous courage in capturing single-handed a notorious brigand, and there is a memory of a fighting quality which is perpetuated by a saying still common in those parts: 'Scratch a Moore and you will yourself bleed'.

They were new English in Ireland and Protestants; no doubt they regarded 'natives' and Catholics with derision, and strongly approved of the Penal Laws. Nevertheless, they emulated the manners of the older gentry, of which a vivid account is given by Mrs. Mary MacCarthy in her biography of the Fighting Fitzgeralds of Mayo:

> Apart from the great Squires the sons of the smaller gentry increased on all sides, conventionality forbidding them to adopt any profession save that of arms. If they did not go into the Army[1], they remained at home serving with the Militia but otherwise idle, with little education saving learning to ride, to shoot, to play cards, to know the Catechism and possibly read a little Virgil. Pistols, cudgels, swords and horse whips were in every young man's hands all of the time.
>
> They spent their time galloping after a few

[1] This however was for Protestants only at that time.

> famished hounds, or ravaging the country in search of unfortunate females whose parents were easily persuaded to sacrifice their daughters for a little money.

Hardly an edifying record, but there were extenuating circumstances and some excuse may be offered when the fact is taken into consideration that their lives and conduct were governed by the rigid dictates of a caste system which forbade a young man of family under any circumstances from tilling the soil, although for some reason which appears illogical they were permitted to become graziers, providing they confined their activities to cattle and horses, sheep being apparently outside the pale.

It must also be remembered that the tyrannical restrictions on commerce imposed by the English custom laws discouraged the growth of a middle class in Ireland which might to a large extent have absorbed these idle young men. Therefore, we must in fairness consider them the victims of circumstances, rather than of any natural baseness inherent to their class.

Sir Jonah Barrington in a history of eighteenth-century Mayo describes the activities of his own brother in an account which is as astounding as it is illustrative of the habits of young squires when a severe spell of weather temporarily debarred them from their normal occupation of the chase. He writes as follows:

> In the frost when hunting was impossible, sporting young Irishmen would shut themselves up to-

gether in a hunting lodge and prepare for what they called 'Hard Going', till the weather should break. All the shutters were closed to keep out the light. Chickens and bacon and a whole cow to cut scallops from were brought into the kitchen for the servants to make feast for the company throughout the week. Straw and blankets were heaped into the bed chamber in common; two pipers, a fiddler and the whipper-in were in attendance, and each day a fresh guest sat with the young host and some hounds around the fire. Cherry Bounce [Brandy] and Claret, cold and mulled, were the beverages. There was piping and singing. The Kilruddy Hunt and the Bumpers Squire Jones were the songs of the day. A fox's brush stuck in a candlestick in the centre of the table was worshipped as a divinity. The company would be drunk every night of the five days given up to talking, toasts and ribaldry and wild uproarious laughter and music; winding up finally with a raking pot of tea before emerging into the daylight once again.

The Moores may have quieted down a little when one of them, a George Moore, married Sarah Price, the daughter of a clergyman. Their son John brought a greater change upon the family by his marriage to a Roman Catholic — Jane Athy of Renville, Co. Galway, a slender delicate featured woman, whose portrait, in a dress cut in the style of the Reformation period, hung for over a century at Moore Hall.

Renville House still stands among low blown woods

by the sea at Galway. The Athys were members of the so-called 'Tribes of Galway', powerful merchants in medieval times, who had then ruled the city in the English interest, protecting it against the hand of war. The tribes are enumerated in the mnemonic couplet:

> Athy, Blake, Bodkin, Brown, Deane, Darcy, Lynch,
> Joyce, Kirwin, Martin, Morris, Skerrett, French.

These families for the most part resisted the Reformation, and in that degree became Celticized, but though many of the names are now regarded as distinctly Irish, not one of them, except the Kirwans, can be shown to have been connected with Galway before the fourteenth century.

By the middle of the eighteenth century Galway's former commercial prosperity was in decline. The descendants of the old oligarchy of the city were scattered throughout the counties of Galway and of Mayo, and had adopted the Irish, or Anglo-Irish, style of life. But the burgher virtues reappeared in one at least of the sons of Jane Athy, who was evidently a lady of some note.

She bore five children, three sons and two daughters. The eldest Robert of Ashbrook became a doctor in Galway, and there is a record of his death without issue in 1783. Her second son, George, emigrated to Spain — he is the hero of the first chapters of this book. 'I go to make or mar my fortunes', were his words when he set out.

It would appear that the choice of a country like Spain as a stage for financial adventure would not have been fraught with any great chances of success. But Spain still felt the stimulation of Inca gold, and, moreover, during the eighteenth century bore the same relation to Catholic Ireland as America was destined to assume in 1857. George Moore's Catholic mother must have taken the chief responsibility for him, and it was through her he was able to gain a footing in Spain. Some of Mrs. Moore's relatives were already established there: the Wild Geese, these exiles were called, but many of them were doing well in a trade in wine with Ireland, chiefly through the town of Galway.

Whether George Moore was brought up as a child in his mother's religion is unknown; but the fact that he should have left Ireland (where Catholics were penalized) for Spain (where Protestantism was not supposed to exist) would indicate that, nominally at least, he adopted his mother's faith. The question, as will be seen later on, is not irrelevant to this narrative, for it bears on the circumstances which in our day disunited the family, uprooted and scattered it into exile.

George Moore quickly prospered in Spain. First he joined a counting house where his probity and diligence were much admired. The next that was heard of him was that he managed a business at Alicante which directed a fleet of ships engaged in the wine and

grain trades, with a side-line perhaps in the manufacture of iodine from kelp exported from the Connemara coast.

In 1765, while still in Spain, he married Catherine de Kilikelly (really Kelly), daughter of an ancient but impoverished family, very proud of its descent from the O'Neills of Tyrone and from the Burkes (Clanricarde). The marriage took place at Bilbao. The lady had been brought to Spain by her father, Dominick Kelly, of Castle Lyndican, Galway, at a very early age, and during her long residence had adopted the customs and language of the Spanish, which fact, together with a portrait in the costume of the Spanish Court, was in later years responsible for the supposition of her Spanish birth, a supposition disproved by documents and correspondence which show that her ancestry was wholly Irish.

In face of the Protestant Ascendancy, Irish Catholics at home suffered a sense of social as well as political inferiority. Nevertheless, George Moore and his wife had a high opinion of their position, as is attested by the fact that the former made application to attend at the Spanish Court.

Being at first refused because of his failure to produce a patent of nobility showing the different quarterings, he travelled to Ireland with a pedigree which claimed descent from the Blessed Thomas More, of whom indeed there was a portrait at Ashbrook. This was registered at the office of the

Ulster King at Arms in Dublin,[1] and in the next of the family portraits Mrs. Moore appeared as dressed for the Court of Madrid. Henceforth husband and wife could consider themselves as belonging to that small and select body of the British Catholic aristocracy, the members of which, though politically depressed, moved familiarly in the highest society of European capitals.

There was indeed no question of any renunciation of nationality, for, in 1780, George Moore made another visit to Ireland, in order that, pursuant to recent Acts of Relief for those of the Popish religion, he might take the oath of allegiance to George III. The document (which still exists) describes him as 'George Moore, formerly of Ashbrook, but now of Alicante'. In this way Irish Catholics were permitted to take leases of land of indefinite tenure.

It was his ambition to retire from business when he had a sufficiency of fortune and to end his days at Ashbrook as an Irish country gentleman. If he delayed in returning, it was probably on his children's account. They must be educated, he said, among the first Roman Catholics of our islands, who in those days had their children schooled abroad. His eldest son, John, went first to Liège and then to the University of Paris. Addressed to Don Gorge Moore, Alicante, España, and dated from Paris, October 11th, 1783, the earliest and longest of the Moore family letters

[1] There are some grounds for accepting its authenticity. The family of Thomas were the Moores of Barnborough in Yorkshire.

which survives is from John; it is written from Paris in a beautiful copy-book hand, and this is how it begins:

'Dear and Honoured Sir,

'You may remember that I had the mortification to part with you and my mother on Friday the 19th ult. when you desired me to write to you to Bordeaux the day following Saturday, in order to know as soon as possible, I imagine, how I liked the college. But as I did not come here before Saturday morning the Principal Mons. Du Bertrand, whom we called upon Friday, being gone out, Mr. Kierney did not of course think proper to leave me in his absence; I thought it needless to write having nothing material to communicate to you and nothing at all about the college. Qualified now better for that task, I shall proceed to give you an account of the chief things concerning it. I find it somewhat more agreeable than it appeared to me during the three or four first days after my entrance, I should not however, I must own, be so happy here as at Liège, did I not consider that it was more proper for me than the other, in order to acquire a good knowledge of the French tongue etc. The Lattin tongue is taught far better here than at Liège which ought to be the case in one of the first Universities in the World, and where the Masters or Professors are well regarded there must be a number of candidates and great emulation for their places when vacant.'

The discipline in the University was so strict that, as

John complained, he had been unable since his arrival to carry out some social instructions from his parents, such as calling upon a young cousin called Creagh at St. Denis; to go out without a servant for the whole day was impossible; and even young Mr. Langton, whose mother lived in Paris, could not obtain permission to spend Sundays with her. There was no way of getting out alone, except by parents requiring to have their son out, and sending a servant, and all the amusement the students could get otherwise was their walk together about the town on Wednesdays — a strictness which might be commendable, 'as the University has sometimes been an over awe to the Government', but was not conducive to a knowledge of French life.

The letter continues:

'After having spent a great deal of my father's money, what shall I know, what accomplishments shall I possess? . . . I shall not possess Lattin perfectly and if I do, which is the most preferable that or History etc. what use is it to me to know Lattin perfectly (which I shall by no means do in the year) whether a Lawyer, Merchant etc. Am I to plead in Lattin? Am I to get my livelihood by making Lattin verses? Am I to be a priest? But some will say that Lattin is necessary to form the judgment, to read those beautiful Histories in that language . . . How seldom does anything that relates to my present study come into the conversation of most people; History and the above

mentioned accomplishments are the perpetual topicks. I might there learn French as well as here, and by principles I believe I shall not be taught here. Secondly I am certain it could not be greater expense to you than to keep me in this place, and much less most probably, presents which I understand are to be given to some of my Masters as New Year gifts and other extraordinaries run away with a deal of money. It would lastly be most agreeable to me as those studies are more pleasing and necessary for me than the others. I might there go out and visit my friends when studies were finished. By what I have said I don't mean to depreciate Lattin or Greek tongues which I greatly esteem, but mean asking your advice if the use of the globes etc.· would not be more useful to me than Lattin; especially when I shall not know that perfectly in a year. Is it not better to make the best use of one's time. I can look over the Lattin in leisure — but however if you are of a different opinion, make it known to me; and the least . . . of your wishes will make me perfectly happy.'

In conclusion, John begged his parents to continue to watch over him with tenderness, so that, fully convinced of the necessity of rules for his conduct, he might continue to regard their existence as the greatest blessing of his life. But it is clear from the letter, as well as from its writer's subsequent career, that John's plausible eloquence concealed a native opposition to the good commanded him.

CHAPTER II

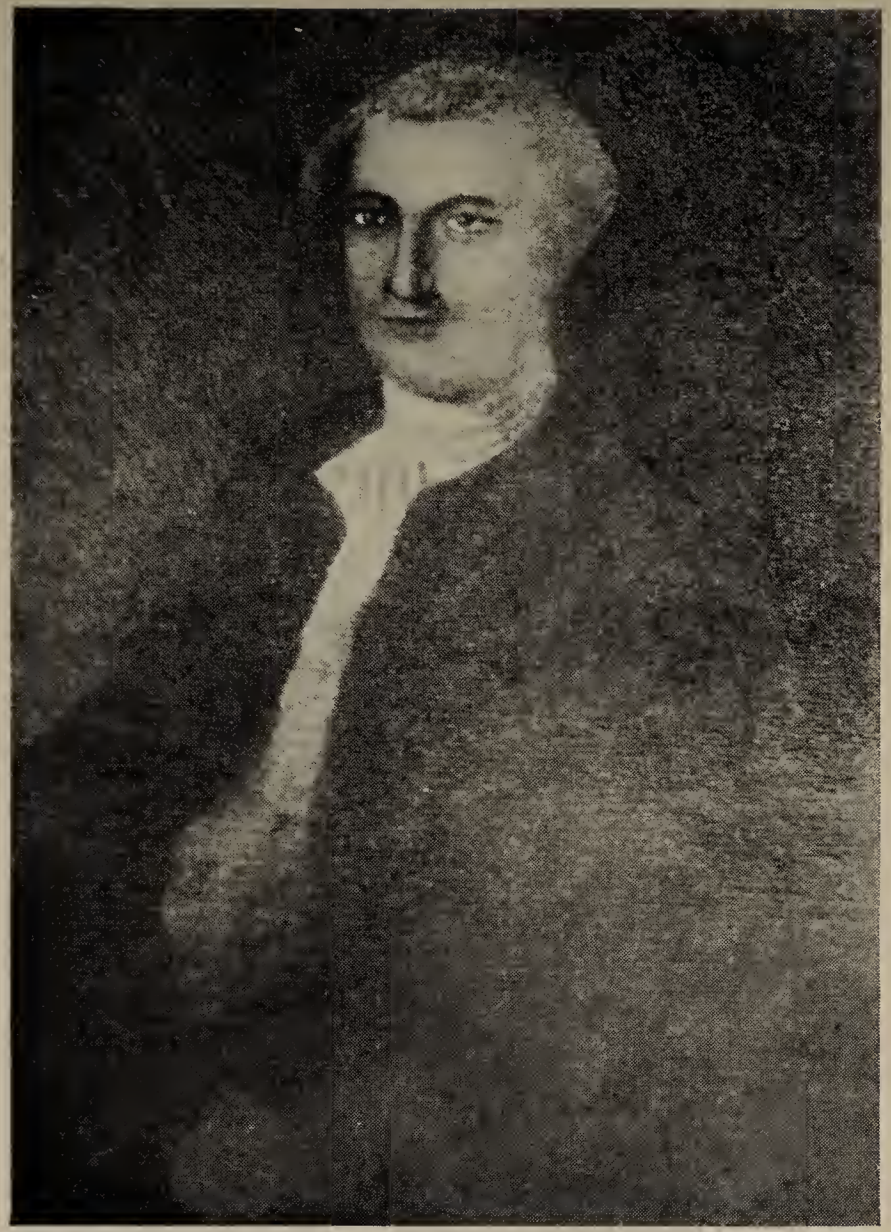
THE HOUSE ON LOUGH CARRA

HAVING now amassed a very considerable fortune, George Moore began to carry out his design of buying land in Mayo. A strange way of making use of one's savings, it seems to us nowadays; but towards the close of the eighteenth century it was as difficult to buy land in Ireland as afterwards it became to sell. Great Britain in the throes of the industrial revolution needed all the corn and cattle of Ireland, and consequently values bounded up. The Irish Parliament's Corn Law of 1784, which excluded foreign grain, bid fair to turn Ireland into a great tillage country. Small holdings began to multiply, and the west in particular was overspread with small but overcrowded communities, because for every patch of land there could be found a tenant to raise from it the scanty supply which he might need for his family's support, and as much grain or other produce as would pay the rent. In Mayo, however, the best lands were always chiefly given to grazing and annually supplied the great cattle fair at Ballinasloe with herds of black cattle and immense flocks of sheep.

His brother of Ashbrook had died, and he had

inherited the family home, together with a parcel of tenanted land; he bought more land in those parts — the Ashbrook estate was valued, even as late as 1912, at £7000. He would have rebuilt and enlarged the house at Ashbrook, only that, in the course of a journey through Mayo, as a prospective investor, he was tempted by another prospect. He came upon the site of Lough Carra, Muckloon, which has been mentioned at the beginning of this book; it so delighted his eyes that he purchased from the owners, who were named MacDonald, 800 acres there, henceforth called the Moore Hall property, and bought big estates at Ballintubber and Partry in the same neighbourhood from a family of Blakes in Galway. Perhaps he found his site while travelling from Ashbrook to Galway, because the road between these places skirts the northern shore of Carra, passing Ballintubber with its ancient Gothic Abbey at the head of the lake, and then running below the Partry mountains. Just off the road, a few miles from Ballintubber, is the green hill called Muckloon above a bay or inlet, which as already said is here interrupted by a long promontory; and on Muckloon Moore Hall rose in 1792, a square Georgian mansion in a clearing of great woods.

The inlet below Muckloon is chequered by numerous islands; but to find the largest island it is necessary to row round the headland into that broader portion of the lake which stretches up to Ballintubber and has the castle of Carra on its farther shore. Both island and



GEORGE MOORE, 1729-1799

MRS. CATHERINE MOORE, HIS WIFE

castle figure largely in the historical novel of the fourteenth century, *Ulick and Soracha*, written by the great-grandson of the founder of Moore Hall, the fourth George Moore, more than a hundred and twenty years afterwards. Marban's island, the island has been called after a poet-hermit, who once lived upon it, and the narrator recalls how in his childhood he used to seek this island by boat . . . 'the very island, Alec, that Marban tells of in his poem written in the tenth century on the occasion of King Guaire's visit to him, an island whose birds and flowers and the peaceful life . . . set the King thinking that perhaps he had lost something in his palace that Marban enjoyed in his lake . . . A rowan tree grew by the oratory in Marban's time, for he mentioned it in his poem, and a rowan tree was covered with berries when we picnicked there in the sixties.' In the fourteenth century the de Burgo held the parapeted walls and turrets of Castle Carra against the Bruces, and in the story the de Burgo's son from France, Ulick, and his servant Tadgh are guided there by a native boy, who tells them as they take the ford at Muckloon of the herd of pigs that a ghost used to trot out of the forest, 'a ghost that would strangle any man or woman if they so much as looked back on the road . . .'[1]

Whether the merchant was interested in history and legend we do not know; but we know that he believed himself to have found as lovely a place as any

[1] Hence the name Muckloon.

in the world. It was convenient, too, with such good towns as Castlebar, Westport and Ballinrobe, north, west and south, all within a distance of fifteen miles. Ball was the nearest large village, and the post town had the name of Ballyglas. Many gentlemen owned seats near by, the Blakes of Tower Hill, who were the nearest neighbours, the Lynch Blosses of Moat near Ball, who also owned Castle Carra, the Browns of Brown Hall and the Ruttledges of Bloomfield. Yet from Muckloon, so well wooded are the low shores of the lake, one seemed, and one still seems, to have Carra in one's sole possession. The Partry hills, which protect its warmth and stillness from the Atlantic gales, is a faint blue line in the west. The soft distances, the liquid light over all, enchanted Moore, and fulfilled the nostalgic dreams of long years in hot and dusty Alicante.

Moore Hall embodied a fine gesture on the part of its unknown architect. It was a solid house of three stories, faced by an immense circular gravel sweep, where any coach and four could wheel and turn with ease. Three flights of limestone steps led up to a high pillared portico, where a massive oak door opened into a hall with a pretty Adam ceiling, where was kept a large iron chest supposed by the children of successive generations to be full of Spanish gold. Above it was the summer room with its balcony and the best view of the lake. A long corridor traversed the ground floor for its entire length, to terminate in a fine staircase;

from this corridor doors opened into a series of apartments designed for hospitality to guests. At the front, on either side of the hall, were the dining- and drawing-room, and at the top of the house the suite of rooms included a private chapel, with mass books, vestments and a silver chalice of 1600, all brought from Spain. The roof was encircled by a stone balustrade, and in the centre directly above the hall door a slab was engraven with the motto: *Fortis cadere cedere non potest.*

Moore Hall and its appendages took four years to build. In common with most country houses of the eighteenth century it had to be self-supporting, and to this end a bakery, a laundry, a blacksmith shop, greenhouses and extensive quarters for masses of servants had to be constructed. At the rear of the house a huge stone wall enclosed a collection of sculleries and outbuildings; and from this courtyard double doors opened into a long dark tunnel which led to the stables, the coach house, other farm buildings, and to the garden. With the completion of this work the Moores became an important county family, and the returned exile, as a proprietor with about £4000 a year, could indulge in the expectation of passing his declining years in the improvement and management of his estates and in the employment of the well-deserved rest which his honest labours had earned him.

But he had left his wife out of his calculations. His first disappointment came when she said that she

found Irish life very strange and Moore Hall very lonely. She had known no life but Spanish life, and even Catholicism in its Irish form disconcerted her. Besides, most of the important neighbours were heretics.

CHAPTER III

TRAGIC HISTORY OF JOHN MOORE

INDEED, with the building of Moore Hall, the troubles and entanglements of the family began. The Moores were never to be lucky when they touched Ireland.

It is true the founder of the house had already suffered the loss of two children. A brother and a sister had been cut off at a tender age by the smallpox in Alicante, but in those days one scarcely expected to rear a large family without such accidents. It was worse when another of Moore's sons, Peter, had to be put under medical care — Peter remained witless all his life, which was a long one.[1] The great grief of the merchant was due to his eldest son John, who seemed unable to make any headway in the world. Whether they were separated or together, father and son were at a loss to one another; and when separated John continuously failed to observe the counsels and admonition which came to him from home. He was always ready in argument and specious in apology.

'Yours', runs one of the letters to his father, 'is a quick turn of temper (and I should hardly be bold

[1] See *infra*, page 101.

enough to say so had you not often acknowledged it to me) and mine possibly of a more passive . . . hence whenever we were together we were at a loss to one another, instead of the benefit and advantage which might accrue from the assistance which as the oldest of my Brothers it was natural I should have first afforded you.'

In 1793 John and his brother George were together in London. Both were reading for the law, or supposed to be doing so. Neither of them cared for the law; but George, an intellectual and gentle youth, gave no positive trouble. He was a favourite in society and had sufficient talents and charm to gain entry into the famous Holland House circle. He became a member of that very exclusive club, 'The King of Clubs', and the intimate friend of the Whig historian Sir James Mackintosh who quotes him as correct in his estimate of the French Revolution. But John, who was near twenty-seven, had done no good in any direction whatever.

At this time the parents were in Alicante, Moore being engaged in closing all his commitments there, preparatory to the final return to Ireland. He sold all his Spanish interests, except the house and garden in the town, which he kept because his wife begged him to do so.

Four letters from John, written in the early months of 1794, survive. Three of them are addressed

to Don George Moore, Alicante, the fourth is to his mother. They make doleful reading:

'Honoured Sir', the first of them begins, 'why was I not cut off with my Brother and Sister by the smallpox afterwards by the ague in the flower of my youth in Paris. But that would have been mercy indeed, and that was not to be my lot in this world whatever it may be in the next. I do not mean to arraign your justice I have nothing to reply but I feel the mortal regret of having survived the commission of the first offence against you.'

'Worse than a pickpocket', was John's account of himself at this gloomy hour; and he had but eightpence in his pocket. There seemed to be nothing for it but to pack him off with a pittance to the East or West Indies.

What the offence was does not appear; but it seems that other young Irishmen in London, some of them with well-known Connaught names, were also involved, and John begs that he may not be disgraced among them and subjected to their sarcasms in his beggary. His next letter shows that his father relented, at least a little:

1577352

'London
24th January, 1794

'My Dear and Honoured Sir,

'I am one of those unfortunate individuals which are not much importance at present with the world. I

lothe to ask things, and to give them that sense, which mankind has justly attacked. Dear to me as well as my Mother you *are*, and ever shall be, whilst animal efforts are in my bosom — of future existence that must be for *futurity* to determine.

'Thus far — and I can say that the favour of yours — and I repeat the favour of the 24th Dec. have reached me. However painful it must be to peruse the 49 lines it contains; and whatsoever nonsense my letter may have been guilty of I still received by your favour, as every communication must be from you, the completest pleasure.

'I believe there have been no case where ever you have urged me (against perhaps my will) that I wished to give my opinion — Entire. But on this I will venture; even the word *Venture* I think harsh from a son to a father, but with regard to the late Peter Daly I must declare that my information is such: that you were in error when any such reasons could be specified by you. . . .

'My last letter was written in a state of desperation and in a manner and with such sensation that with regard to myself I could almost have cursed the hour of my birth. . . .

'I am, with cordiality and esteem
My Dr. Father, though mistakeably
your assuredly Dutiful son
John Moore.

'P.S. Pondicherry is taken by the British Arms.'

It was arranged that John should leave London for Dublin and be called to the Irish Bar. 'Let Dublin then be the Theatre', he remarked with his customary grandiloquence.

'London
14th February, 1794

'Honoured Sir,

'I do myself the pleasure of taking up my pen not so much for the matters I have to communicate; as the effort of the firm resolution I am determined inflexibly to maintain never more to give you cause or my mother of the least complaint on point of writing it is not by the way of promise I say so but from a through conviction that my conduct since the beginning of 1794 to you both will be such, that I hope for your goodness not only to receive the affection which should subsist between Parent and Child but also that esteem the distinguishing mark of real and sincere friends.

'It is with pleasure that I have to inform you that the Parliament since its meeting 21st January has repealed in favour of Roman Catholics the double Land Tax, who pay now with their fellow subjects 4s. instead of 8 in the pound. God Almighty has been very good to us in the alteration of people's minds since the year 1780. It is astonishing to see the alacrity of all manner of persons to subscribe for the poor clergy of France who have taken refuge here to preserve their lives and their religion. Charitable sermons have been

preached on their behalf in all the Churches of England, and it is happy to see all that hatred and animosity against Catholics almost completely vanished so that now in England and Ireland we are on the same footing except as to places of trust and emolument. You have heard I suppose that a Militia is established in the latter country, tho' it met with a good deal of opposition at first. I think besides a defence of the country it will greatly tend to civilize the lower orders of the people . . . I see among the new taxes a duty of 8/4 on every cwt. of materials for making glass. I cannot say whether Basilla is included so I hope it will not affect you. I suppose you are acquainted with the death of Denis Daly of Dunsandle and Peter Daly, Cloonesha, the latter died of a dropsy. His two sons are at an Academy at Hackney near London where Stutterers are taught to speak. [Here other Irish friends in London are mentioned.] George is very well, he is grown so tall you would not know him and as full of life and vivacity as ever. I make no doubt but he will make a brilliant figure . . . Dear Father believe me that I have nothing so near at heart than to be considered by you and my mother what I trust henceforward I shall prove to be.

'Yours truly Dutiful & Affte. Son,
John Moore.'

But that was not the end of the misery which John Moore chose to inflict upon his parents and upon

himself. The next time it was political mischief into which he fell. He went to Dublin to read for the Bar. All hoped that he had learned his lesson; but no sooner was he in Dublin than he began to keep company with the conspirators of the United Irish Republican movement and lost sight of all his legal engagements. There were genuine lovers of their country in the movement, high-minded Utopians of the age of enlightenment, but also many whose motive at bottom was a rooted preference for anything but an honest day's work, unemployed and unemployables. John, it is to be feared, must be put into this latter category, since he had certainly not been brought up in the new French principles, and indeed, as his letter from London shows, had, as lately as 1794, utterly condemned them. Republican and democratic sentiments, though they had now spread widely among the masses of the Irish people, were as much at variance with the Irish Catholic tradition, as upheld by the Catholic gentry and by the Jacobite exiles of the Penal Laws, as were the notions and interests of the Protestant and Hanoverian ascendancy class.

Moore and his Irish Spanish lady, now settled at Moore Hall, shared with their neighbours of property, Protestant and Catholic, all the anxieties of the time. In 1798 a force of Frenchmen under General Humbert landed at Killala on the northern coast of Mayo. The tradition of the family is that John, disregarding the entreaties of his parents, at once mounted a horse

and rode off at the head of a considerable body of Moore tenantry to place his services at the disposal of the French Commander. A romantic picture, but it seems more likely that he acted without his parents' knowledge and, having committed himself to the conspiracy, went straight from his law chambers in Dublin to the west. The insurgent force was small. Records of that day placed the number at less than nine hundred French regulars and some badly armed Irish rebels. But a rapid march brought it by surprise on a large English Army assembled at Castlebar and such was the skill with which the operation was managed that 10,000 red coats were scattered and fled. It would seem that John Moore had distinguished himself in the engagement, for his name appears at the head of General Humbert's proclamation with the rank and title of Citizen John Moore, President of the Republic of Connaught. This document found its way later to Moore Hall and was preserved there until the destruction of the house itself.

This 'Government of Connaught' proposed to raise and equip a force of Militia and organize supplies for their French allies. Records of that date show that the force decided on was to number eight regiments of infantry each of 1200 men and four cavalry regiments of 600. Orders issued from Army headquarters in Castlebar shortly after the Irish occupation read as follows:

> All persons having received arms and clothing and failing to join the Army within 24 hours are declared rebels and traitors. Every male between the ages of 16 and 40 inclusive is hereby ordered to repair instantly to the French camp in order to march *en masse* against the enemy.

It is possible that General Humbert, if he had taken advantage of the demoralized condition of the English forces and followed up his initial success by a resolute advance, might have succeeded in obtaining mastery, at least temporarily, over all Connaught; but precious time was wasted in festivities and indecision and when presently the march was resumed the opportunity was lost, and he and his entire army were surrounded and forced to surrender at Ballinamuck on September 8th, one week after the victory of Castlebar.

The term of capitulation granted by Lord Cornwallis, the English Commander, seems to have been not ungenerous to the French, but either from inability or downright callousness General Humbert made no determined effort to obtain clemency for his Irish friends. A terrible campaign of revenge was immediately initiated on the latter; raiding troops marched up and down Mayo shooting and pillaging and committing atrocities on the unarmed peasantry. The news of Humbert's defeat was brought to Moore Hall by a ragged peasant, who, cap in hand in the drawing-room, warned George Moore and his wife, that the troops were marching on their way to search

the islands of the lake for rebels. Tradition relates that George Moore at once loaded the family plate into chests and conveyed it on donkeys to the safety of the mountains.

In the round up, John Moore was captured, though not on the lake. The predicament of his father who had (as already noted) taken an Oath of Allegiance to King George III, was indeed dreadful; not only was John's life forfeit, but he himself was shamed in his own and his neighbours' eyes.

How high feeling ran among the neighbours is shown by the fact that Denis Browne, a member of the innumerable gentry of Browne, and the Earl of Altamont's cousin, offered his services to the Government as Chief Prosecutor. But in spite of — perhaps because of — taunts, Moore did everything that was possible for the scapegrace son. The best legal advice was sought, and the lawyer succeeded in raising a conflict between the civil and military authorities over the custody of the prisoner. For over a year the young man was hauled from pillar to post. From Castlebar they took him to Athlone, and from Athlone to Dublin; in November 1799 he was back in Castlebar. While he was in Dublin a memorial for his pardon was presented to the Viceroy, but without success. The lawyer was in such constant attendance upon him and upon the weeping mother at Moore Hall, that the bill of costs (which is preserved among the Moore Papers) amounted to £2200 at the close, and it would have

been larger (he noted) but for 'my friendship with Mr. Moore'; his absorption in the case lost him all other business during the Michaelmas and Hilary terms.[1]

For a long time the fate of John Moore remained a mystery. Beyond the fact that records of the Bellew family of Mount Bellew show that he was lodged at that place for one night 'driven along sick and almost barefooted', as the accounts relate, nothing was known, and although with the passage of time, tradition wove many romantic tales about his memory, none of them could be substantiated by reliable evidence.

However, a recent fortunate discovery in the archives of the British Museum has served to lift the veil which for one hundred and thirty-seven years has clouded the end of a personage, to whom if only for a minute period, belongs nevertheless the honour of being the first President of an Irish republic. History is indebted to Dr. Hayes for this interesting discovery. Extracts from official documents in the museum are as follows:

Waterford,
Nov. 16th, 1798

John Moore Esq., two R.C. clergymen of the names of Cannon & Molloney, a frier named Kileen, Valantine Jordain a respectiable farmer all from the vacinity of Castlebar & Fergus an innkeeper from Westport were brought in here

[1] The costs however were contested by Moore and reduced by £900.

with eight others by a party of Hompeschs cavalry. Those whose names are above mentioned were permitted to lodge at the Royal Oak tavern with guards placed on the room they were in. They have entered into recognizance to transport themselves from his majesties dominions which measure they prefer to risking a trial. Moore was so emaciated from illness that his attendants were obliged to carry him from his carriage to the tavern.

Saturday Dec. 14/1798

On Friday last John Moore died at the Royal Oak tavern of an illness and obstinate disorder. His remains were privately interred on Sunday at Ballygannon cemetary. He had been some weeks since on his way to Duncannon fort, but had been taken ill at the Royal Oak tavern. He was not only permitted to remain there but received all possible medical assistance and every other indulgence compatiable with his safe keeping.

Colonel Maurice Moore in his biography of his father, G. H. Moore, says that John escaped at one point; but having determined to save a gallant retainer 'persuaded the retainer that being a Spanish subject he was himself safe', and was recaptured. Both Dr. Hayes (*Last Invasion of Ireland*) and Colonel Moore dwell on the cruelties to which the captive was subjected. But the details on the lawyer's bill of costs seem to show that John was treated as well as might be expected; while in the Dublin prison he had three

physicians calling upon him — their charges are duly entered in the lawyer's accounts.

It is very strange and a hint of deeper mysteries that the true end of John should have so long remained unknown, even to his family, who had never abandoned him. Or did his father at the last cease to care what became of him? His mother, we know, always cherished his memory.

CHAPTER IV

GEORGE MOORE THE SECOND, HIS WIFE AND FAMILY

One more disaster befell the merchant of Alicante. He went blind in his sleep. A year later a paralytic stroke put an end to his troubles. He was buried, according to his desires, near Ashbrook, but not among his ancestors in the Protestant cemetery of Straid Abbey, where in spite of his conversion he had wished to lie. His Catholic widow put him in the ground of a little ruined chapel near by.

His successor was his second son: the George Moore who, as already mentioned, had been in his youth a considerable figure in the Holland House circle. Of the four sons of the merchant he was by far the best endowed in character and in intelligence, and it seemed that with him the fortunes of the family should be in safe hands. As a youth he had shown an elegant taste in his amusements; his opinions were refined and moderate, and his temper was sweet. He had not long settled at Moore Hall before his fellow landlords recognized his ability, and he was asked by them to write a petition on the Corn Bill which was presented to the House of Commons. The document set forth in a reasonable manner the case of Irish agricul-

ture for an exclusively reserved market in Great Britain, and criticized the growth of the 'avidity for cheapness', both on general grounds and because it would damage the interest of the Irish landlords, whose taste for 'elegant expense' might be said to be unmatched by any nobility and gentry of the world.

Unhappily, his health betrayed him early, and he was prevented from realizing his hope of leading the life of a reforming landlord at Moore Hall. Soon he had to hand over his affairs to the lady whom he had wooed and won in Holland House days, a niece of the second Earl of Altamont, whose son became first Marquess of Sligo. The Altamonts were among the first families of the Irish Protestant Ascendancy; but Louisa for some reason that is not stated, had been educated in Roman Catholicism, in which faith she remained staunch. The match would have been considered an excellent one, but for the fact that Louisa's cousin was the same Denis Browne who had prosecuted the unhappy John Moore with such vindictiveness at the Castlebar trial. For this reason George's marriage was never forgiven by his mother's relatives, the more Irish and the more Catholic portion of the family, and the strife and division were aggravated when George's brother, Thomas, put forward a claim to the Alicante property, encouraged thereto by his mother. The latter retired to London on her jointure of £11,000, where she lived until her death many years afterwards; she never again put her foot inside

Moore Hall. Thomas lost the lawsuit, but, subsequently, with his brother's permission, he went to Alicante and tried to revive the family business. In this he failed owing to the French wars; the house at Alicante however remained in the possession of the family up to 1860.

The new mistress of Moore Hall recked little of the criticism of her relatives-in-law. Louisa Browne was a haughty, passionate and domineering woman. She was fond of money and good at figures. She did not discourage her husband from his growing habits of a recluse, and gladly took on her shoulders the responsibility for the finances of the family and the management of the property.

George Moore II sank back more and more into his own thoughts which dwelt chiefly on the meaning and value of human agitations. One of the guest's rooms at the back of the house became his library, a very pretty room, with his own portrait as a little boy in green, done at Alicante, hanging over the mantelpiece, and the shelves soon filled up with books, chiefly histories. In his first years at Moore Hall, he composed a work on the British Revolution of 1688; he wrote well, in a smooth style, modelled on Gibbon. The book was published in 1817 by Longmans, and the chapter of reflections at its close shows how justly he described himself later on as 'impregnated with the feelings and sentiments of an Englishman', when also he wrote of Moore Hall that 'beautiful as it is as much

as I love it I have not always been able to exclude ennui from its precincts'. The siege of Limerick he considered to have completed the Revolution, and, though he deplored the Penal Laws, he loathed all the motions of Irish patriots and political Catholics, it being his opinion that the Relief of Catholics should be made to co-operate with the Revolution and the Union. He described the rebellion in which his brother John had taken part as 'wicked and profligate', and the Union of the two Parliaments in 1800 as an indispensable step towards the civilization of Ireland. 'It will diffuse British customs and manners', he wrote, 'among the inhabitants and gradually wear away those of their old primitive habits which still infest them. If the whole bundle of Irish MSS. pedigrees, histories and traditions were finally to perish, abundant good would be done to the country. They only serve to nourish and foster vacuity, idleness and habits pernicious to industry.'

There were three sons of the marriage, George Henry, Augustus and John. George Henry, born in 1810, was the eldest. His early education was entrusted to a French governess named Therese; he showed exceptional promise; as soon as he reached the age of nine, the question of finding the best school for him arose.

The choice of the parents fell not on an Irish but on an English School. George Henry was sent to St.

Mary's College, Oscott, four miles from Birmingham. It was not an exile, twice a year he came back for the holidays. Steam navigation between Ireland and England recommenced in 1824, and it was not yet possible to step aboard the packet at Dublin on an evening and be at Manchester or Birmingham on the following day. The difficulties and discomforts of travel in those days must seem to us to have been very great, and it is astonishing that the parents should have separated themselves by such a distance for long periods from so small a boy. But there was a want of good schools in Ireland, especially for Catholics, and it may be that George Moore and his wife would in any case have wished to bring up their children in English rather than Irish Catholicism — to make sure that the religion of the family should not be discredited with dirt and brogue. Oscott, indeed, was, or aspired to be, an Eton for Roman Catholics of the British Isles, having been founded in 1794 by a group of nobility and gentry of the old faith, whose design it was that their sons should be educated in an atmosphere at once English and Catholic. Clergymen composed the whole staff at Oscott, and provision existed for the reception as free scholars of a fixed number of boys, the sons of poor parents, who were destined for the priesthood; these were derisively called 'bunkers' by the sprigs of the nobility and gentry. In George Henry's time the school, after early vicissitudes, was beginning to do well, and before he left, under a new

President, the 'pious and courteous' Henry Weedall, as he is described by the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, had entered upon an era of prosperity.

None of George Henry's early letters from Oscott survive to let us know how he endured what must have been at first an agonizing loneliness and strangeness. When he was about fourteen, however, he wrote so well that his parents started making a collection of his letters.

'Perhaps you will say', the boy wrote from Dublin on his way back to Oscott after the Christmas of 1824, 'that it was for love of delaying going to school that I stopped this day but I assure you that I felt myself more fatigued than I imagined I should be and utterly incapable of going next morning. I therefore stopped another day as you directed me if I was tired. I went up in the coach with Mr. G. Glendining who was amused on the way by an old flute-player at Acisker. I don't know whether I spell the name right or not. He is an old man who gains his livelihood by following the coaches and playing at all rates on a little six inch thing of a flute. "Why old fellow", said Mr. Glendining, "it was reported in Mayo that you were dead." "A sign of long life your honour", said the old booby, "now I'll play your honour the old woman who fell into the fire the other day, she's now trying to walk by stratagem"; and then by the tune attempted to imitate the lameness of her march. "She's getting better your honour", said he and then went on playing, "she's

almost well now." "She's quite recovered," was his last interlude and played more merrily as if to signify her perfect recovery. I saw here the picture of "Belshazzar's feast" I paid sixpence to see it and never was money better laid out, it certainly was the finest picture I ever saw and never shall I forget the way it struck me when I saw it. It is not above three yards long and as many high but the figures and the countenances are such that it would keep you a few hours looking at it. There are above a thousand figures in the picture of which that of the prophet Daniel is more conspicuous . . . Tell Terese that she must consider this letter written to her also for I have not got time to write to both. Give my love to my papa, John, Terese, Dust, Mary, etc., and believe me

'Your affectionate child

Geo. Moore.'

By this time the boy had entered with gusto into the life of the school. He was already a good classical scholar, much admired for his Latin verses, and according to all signs had inherited his father's literary gifts. The boy formed his own opinions. Maybe he had the Irish taste for being in opposition, for this is what he describes himself as having said at the school society when it debated the then rising belief of forced education for all. Nearly a hundred years later his son, with curiously similar turns of phrase, pleaded for a renaissance of illiteracy.

The point on which we are this night summoned to debate is the education of the poor, but why should I mention this when I see every eye beaming with approbation of that opinion to which I am going to give a negative? (cries of No, No). Then Gentlemen I affirm that this education is very detrimental to the general welfare of those on whom it is bestowed. It makes them bad servants; for who can suppose that those who have during their youth being learning the refined ideas of an Addison or a Pope can listen with delight to the frizzling of a capon or the bubbling of the cauldron. . . .

The educated peasant thinks himself capable of judging for himself, he examines the Bible. But gentlemen only look back into history. When the Gospel was first introduced into England and the Cross was exalted over the temples of idolatry, the English peasant was uneducated; he listened with respect to the lessons of his pastor, and then England was really a happy country, it was, Gentlemen, the island of saints. But when the baneful seeds of general education were everywhere spread, then the sable banner of heresy was everywhere exalted; everyone set up as a preacher of some religion of his own, and then arose all those different opinions which disgrace Christianity, which now blast the face of Britain, and which have rendered hapless Erin the lowest of the low. (Cheers). But why, Gentlemen, should I paint to you the wrongs of my wretched country, for now it is *disloyalty* to *love her*, tis *Treason* to defend her . . . Then if you see the poor hungry, give them to eat; if you see them naked clothe

them, but oh withhold I beseech you that instruction which may prove so fatal, so destructive, to the interests of those on whom you bestow it.

In 1827 the young man indulged a turn for rhetorical satire by writing an Elegy on the Duke of York, Prince-Bishop of Osnabruck and former Commander in Chief, the gross son of George III, and this was followed by a long poem on an Eastern subject, 'Irene', which the *London and Dublin Magazine* accepted. His oil colours too were very promising. A little later he showed his love of home by invoking his muse to celebrate a romantic history which he imagined for the churches and castles of Lough Carra at the time of Cromwell's invasions. In the school debates he upheld Daniel O'Connell and the Irish cause in a way which may have caused his father, with John Moore's fate in mind, some uneasiness. Try as he would, he told George Moore, he could not but consider Demosthenes as very inferior to O'Connell and Shiel.

A little later his proud parents received a letter which told how the boy's literary aptitude was being put to the service of early numbers of the *Oscottian*.

'Dearest Mamma', it ran, 'The printing press came to-day with all the apparatus such as type etc. We have already set a page. It is small print and in double columns. You complain in your last that I have not written to you, that is very extraordinary for I am certain I have. I wrote to my papa very lately: I hope you approve of the poem it enclosed.

O'CONNELL ADDRESSING A MEETING IN KERRY

'I am going to write rather an eccentric sort of communication for the *Oscottian* of which I have written the first number viz — "Hours of musing and reverie" — Give my love to John and tell him that I think he might spare a little time to write to me, he has twenty times as much time as I have, and if he knew how much pleasure a letter from him gives me I am sure he would write to me oftener. Give my love to my Papa, Terese (to whom by all that is good I'll never write again) and to Mary, Dust, Julia, etc.

'and believe me dearest Mamma notwithstanding the shortness of my letter.

Your affectionate child

Geo. Moore'

But Mrs. Moore was an exacting mother, and the following letter from her son is only one of many in which he was obliged to answer her reproaches.

'My dearest Mamma,

'I received your (I cannot say very kind) letter today, in fact not five minutes ago, in which you complain of my not writing to you; I assure you upon my honour (if you can believe after what you have said that I have got any) that I wrote to you the instant I reached Oscott. My delay in Dublin was owing not I assure you to any wish or inclination of my own but to a circumstance which I explained to you in my former letter, namely that Mr. Molloy called on me at John W. Browne's and begged of me to wait another couple of

days in order that I might accompany his son Charles who is a little boy and whom he did not like to send by himself and he said he could not get him ready by the time I was going . . . if I had here consulted my own inclinations I could have left Dublin for I must say J. Browne was not very kind to me; he invariably dined out while I was in Dublin and left word that I might have a beefsteak if I wished it; his proferred beefsteak I never partook, and I invariably dined out also, one day at the Molloys another at Clontarf and another — nowhere at all, I eat my breakfast once with him and no more; such was my life in Dublin; judge then whether I had any attractions there . . . The confidence you say you placed in me could not have been very strong if it could be so easily shaken and as for the vacation if I thought you could so easily make up your mind to part with me then even if I had offended I would have no wish to return. As for the charge of meanness with which you asperse me I know you were then only hurried along by the impulse of passion as I hope that vice you could never discover in me though no loves were sent to me I send them to you all and remain

'Your affectionate child
Geo. Moore.'

When the boy went in the following year to Cambridge, he left behind him at Oscott the reputation of the most gifted pupil which the school had yet had.

CHAPTER V

GEORGE MOORE THE THIRD MIS-SPENDS HIS YOUTH

Our narrative returns to Moore Hall, where the second George Moore was engaged in rapidly completing *A Treatise on the Art of Reasoning*, a book of philosophy which came down very heavily on the side of the English and Scotch tradition as against Kant and his followers, and proclaimed the author's belief in Natural Religion and the possibility of finding rational proofs for the existence of a Supreme Being.

The work was intended for his eldest son on his going to the University, and it contained a dedicatory preface to George Henry which admonished him to become, on leaving Cambridge, a resident and improving Irish landlord, not a prodigal, trying to dazzle by a parvenu extravagance either London society or his toadies and dependants in Mayo. There were tracts on George Moore's estate without roads, culture or civilization, and he meditated on the improvements which his son's energy and education might bring about in the industry of the inhabitants and appearance of the country — the introduction of carts, ploughs, harrows and improved implements, new enclosures made, lime-kilns built and so forth.

But he had made a grave mistake in sending the boy to Cambridge. George Henry wasted his time at Cambridge among others who had too much money. His bent was towards action, not sedentary toil, and when his parents recalled him to the west of Ireland action meant gambling, hunting and racing and quarrels with the neighbours. It was in vain that his father produced his maxims for the wise conduct of life, setting before him the example of his kinsman, the late and first Lord Sligo, formerly Altamont, who had made Westport as neat and convenient a town as one could see even in England. 'How well I remember the last time I saw the Marquess,' he would often say. 'He was in the carriage to which his infirmities had condemned him. It was in Westport, in the streets of the town which was arising under his care out of dirt and beggary, and from there he could survey the fields which he had rescued from the ocean, the mountains he had reclaimed from uncouth barrenness and clothed with harvests. Every time new pleasure was discernible in his eyes . . . .'

The young man would not listen. At no time was George Henry dissipated, or really self-indulgent, but he was headstrong violent and extravagant. He had inherited his father's intelligence and his mother's character; Schopenhauer says it is the other way round with the man of genius. The third George Moore was a man not of genius but of extraordinary talents.

George Moore soon recognized that he had no talent for bringing up youth, and he handed his son over to his wife who would have been prepared to direct an Empire. The relations which developed between mother and son are summed up in the words of the Roman poet: *Non possum vivere cum te nec sine te.* They loved each other fiercely, and fought as fiercely as they loved. There were faults on the mother's side. A bust of her second son, John, was in the drawing-room; she had lost him, her ewe lamb, as a result of a riding accident, but it was unreasonable that on this account Mrs. Moore should have wanted, as she did, never to see a horse again at Moore Hall. Horses were the absorbing passion of Mayo, and compliance with his mother's demands might almost have cut George Henry off from all contact with human life. Perhaps he would have occupied himself with 'improvements', had he not known that his masterful mother would insist on calling the tune; in the most favourable conditions she would have been reluctant to relinquish her control of the family purse. The conditions were not favourable, for George Henry had a lavish nature, and was unendowed with a sense of the value of money.

He rode madly, violently, and his mother was always in terror that he would be brought home dead. A good idea of the almost barbarous courage which then characterized Irish steeplechases can be obtained from the account of a German prince, who, on visit to the west of Ireland in 1830, was taken to see the

Galway races. The occasion brought out among other characteristics the utter inability of the poor to resist ardent spirits, their sudden and continual wild quarrels and in all classes a light-hearted carelessness, a natural fluency and eloquence, an unbounded hospitality. Hundreds of drunken men accompanied the prince's carriage to the course, and the prince counted a dozen fights between them on the way. The race itself was 'a remarkable sight of its kind, and exactly suited to a half savage nation'; but to enjoy it one had to leave pity and humanity at home. The walls, or hedges of stone without mortar, were five feet high and two feet broad, the riders young men of good family in elegant jockey dresses of coloured silk jackets and caps, leather breeches and top hats. When in the third heat the favourite had distanced the other two in the two successive leaps, he set his foot, in the third, on a loose stone and fell backwards on his rider with such violence that both lay motionless. When the other riders came up, they took not the slightest notice but accomplished the leap. The horse got up after a few seconds, but the rider did not recover his senses. A surgeon pronounced his state to be hopeless; both his breast bone and skull were fractured. His old father, who stood by, fell senseless on the ground; but scarcely anyone else showed a sign of interest in the tragedy. After the poor young man had been repeatedly bled, so that he lay on the turf weltering in his blood, he was taken away, and the last heat began at the appointed

time as if nothing had happened; the winner — perhaps he was George Henry Moore — arriving so exhausted at the post that he could scarcely speak. In a space of less than two hours, reckoning the intervals, he had run twelve English miles at full speed and leaped the wall twelve times.

After hanging about Moore Hall for three or four years, George Henry had made such a number of undesirable companions that his mother decided to send him to London, for the study of law. He consented readily enough; but was unhappy when he got to London. 'He is suffering from what the French called ennui', his father said, 'a common malady with the young. They would find more amusement at home than what the most luxurious capitals can supply. A course of improvements at home would more effectually release them from the pressure of ennui than lounging in London.'

Racing and hunting could have filled his life; but they were impossible on an allowance of £400 a year. Nevertheless, he attempted the impossible, and was soon heavily in debt. His mother foresaw imminent ruin for the family; she sent excited messages both to her lawyer and her banker in London, saying that he must come home at once.

'My dear Mrs. Moore,' the lawyer replied to her from 10 Portland Place, 'I have directed to send off

your son directly, and to arrange as best I can his affairs here . . . We must cut the knot and he must return to you and I hope learn wisdom by reflection. He appears to me not to have an idea of the value of money and from all I see if left here will soon run into debt again without really finding out that he is doing anything outrageous. I have paid the —— a part of his demand to the extent of a horse he sold to my son and he has sold another of his horses for £70 which I told him to take to Anderson on account, as it was from a horse bought of him. Anderson has just been here and tells me he has paid him £50 of the £70. I have I fear lost my temper with Anderson. I told him it was a scandalous transaction to let a youth like this have horses to the amount of 200 guineas without enquiring of his parents.

'I find I cannot get your son's assistance in arranging all this cruel business and therefore I shall furnish him with money to take him home and the more he is brought to feel the folly and unkindness of his conduct the better. I hope he will be with you soon after this, but I see he must be fairly seen off to prevent making bad worse, for professing as he does every disposition to second my endeavours, I have no confidence in his assurances, at least in his acting upon them.

'I saw your sister Miss Brown at Bath who is sadly annoyed at all this and I send you the letter enclosed. Of course I have made no use of her cheque. I think George's Heart is good but he certainly does not

feel as he ought the Distress and Vexation of which he has been the cause. He is very young and very giddy.'

Prior to June the sums of money due by George Henry and partly paid by money raised by his father from time to time amounted to £1194 10s. 9d. A horse dealer, a tailor, a bookmaker and the banker, Hugh Hammersley, were his chief creditors.

The attempt to keep guard over him at Moore Hall miscarried, and in the years following he was still for the most part away from home — in London, Bath and Dublin. In these places he had relations who were nothing loth to play the spy on him, notably his aunt, Miss Browne, a disagreeable woman, who took a gloomy pleasure in reporting the worst.

His mother's remedy was marriage. But to the question why, if his heart was indeed disengaged, he would not wed one of the numerous 'amiable Catholic girls' in the circle of his family's acquaintance he replied, 'Yes, a Catholic and not ugly — a Catholic and not dirty — a Catholic and not a fool — that is all I bargain for. I have no objections to Catholicity in the abstract.'

The truth is his heart was engaged, but the lady in question was already married. When the facts came to light his mother sent him a letter 'blotted with tears' (the ink has run together on the paper); she accused him of the deepest treachery and called upon

him to forfeit the affection of his parents or to cease attendance upon 'that woman'.

As a compromise he said he would winter abroad. He conveyed this decision to his mother in a violent letter, splashed with menacing hints. Having bidden farewell to 'the fondest feeling of his heart', he could accept, he said, no responsibility for the order of his reason. Indeed, he felt that the 'black wings of the angel of madness' were already hovering over him. 'Love Augustus; he will deserve it; I never can.' His Uncle Peter's derangement was his trump card whenever he was baulked in his desires.

The banker, Hugh Hammersley, found however that he was looking very well. After all, he was but twenty.

'Dear Madam', Hammersley wrote on the 13th July, 1832, 'I have just seen your son looking very well and setting off this afternoon for the continent. In conformity with your letter I have given him £100 in anticipation of his next quarter, and I have done so in five of our circular notes for £20 each. As he seemed to have no immediate fixed destination a credit for this sum would not have answered to him; but when he settles himself anywhere, we can if you wish it give him one, ordering a particular correspondent to let him have fixed sums at appointed periods, but we could not give a general credit of that sort. We can send him more of these notes if you please. He talked of wintering at Vienna.'

His aunt soon heard what he thought of her:

'Calais
[no date]

'My dearest Aunt,

'I write to you from Calais where I have been detained for these last few days by a dreadful sore throat. I am sorry that you should think it delicate proper or even decent to write me the letter I last received from you. I had resolved never to write or speak to you again and had set out from London with that determination. I am however sorry that your better feelings had not withheld you from writing that which would be bitterly unkind if it were less absurd. I am sure that it was not written in any other feeling than that of regard and affectionate advice for me. Forgive me if I was led by my feelings into any opinion of you that I ought not to have entertained but in the name of God for the future abstain from touching a subject, which it seems you cannot touch without violating tact and decency — and which if continued can but put an end to the mutual good will which ought and should and I think always will exist between you and your affectionate nephew.

'G. H. Moore'

A sore throat was not all that detained him at Calais. He had a rendezvous there with one of his creditors, a disreputable half-gentleman from the West of Ireland named Joe MacDonnell, who had lately sold him a

horse for £100 cash and a promissory note of £400. MacDonnell was a chief of the Irish sporting underworld, and Mrs. Moore held her son's association with him in particular horror. He was known as 'the twenty tumbler man', which meant that he could drink that number of whisky punch tumblers at a sitting; but it is fair to say that Moore did not want to drink with him — none of the Moores ever drank. The business at Calais was the promissory note, the existence of which the vigilant Mrs. Moore had lately detected. She had now intervened with an offer to buy the bond at a discount. Moore advised MacDonnell to make the best possible bargain with her, and the latter finally accepted Mrs. Moore's £200, and surrendered the note. Some years later, MacDonnell asserted in a law court that Moore promised him to pay the balance of the £400 when his ship came home; but, however that may have been, it appears that their conversations at Calais were conducted in a spirit of friendliness.

In the spring following, after his trip abroad, George Henry passed the season at Bath with his aunt. While there he looked up his surviving brother, Augustus, who was still in the 'young hopeful' stage and at school at Priors Park, under the Rev. H. F. C. Logan, a mathematician of some note. Augustus was showing an extraordinary precocity in mathematics subjects; but his character at Priors Park was so little like that of a scholar as to make his teachers fear that he was a

'faked' genius. This was also George Henry's first impression.

'My dearest mother,' he wrote, 'I have seen Augustus since the receipt of yours enclosing his curiosity of a letter. You have however not heard much of the gentleman's conversation lately as I have or you would not be surprised at the tone of overwhelming vanity and self conceit in which it is written — he is absolutely overpowering. The other day he asked me to send a solution of some problem of his to Charles Kirwan at Cambridge to see whether it was correct as of course many of Charles' friends then would be able to decide. In this I saw nothing to object to and promised to send it if he could include it in a letter to Priors Park. Imagine my astonishment when I received a letter from him the same evening containing not the solution — but the *challenge* to the whole University of Cambridge to solve it — concluding by saying, "If they fail, I *engage* to produce any solution". To complete the joke the *challenge* was written in Latin — in the very words used by Leibnitz when he submitted some problem to Sir Isaac Newton. After this, as you may imagine the letter you sent me was cold and *tame* — However it amused me very much, and I walked up to Priors Park the same day where I gave him a sound rating for his folly — and, as far as his self-complacency would admit, endeavoured to convince him of what a fool he had made of himself — He had promised all

manner of things, but I fear his conceit is almost incurable — with this exception however I think his character as a boy is very superior to that of most persons of his age but that one drop of evil poisons every good and praiseworthy principle of his nature. . . .'

A letter which George Moore now received from the Rev. H. F. C. Logan roused Mrs. Moore's further anxiety, and she begged George Henry to make a second visit to Priors Park. On this occasion, George Henry formed a much better opinion of his brother, and tried to dissuade his mother from her fears. 'I must beg to differ from you', he wrote, 'as to the contents of Mr. Logan's letter. I think the account which he there gives of Augustus very satisfactory, and so far from his taste for mathematics being a humbug I think his love for the science amounts to a passion and that love like his for any science is not a *wandering* very usual for boys of his age. Altogether it is my conviction that with the exception of very great self-sufficiency his whole conduct and tenor of spirit is admirable.'

George Moore said that the best advice about Augustus must be taken. They called in a really famous man, William Rowan Hamilton, Astronomer Royal of Ireland at the age of twenty-two, later the discoverer of the Quaternion theory, who is still considered to have been one of the greatest mathematicians of all time. His opinion of the fifteen-year-old boy was that with perseverance he could scarcely

fail to become eminent. This would have been a consolation to Mrs. Moore, had she not again become uneasy about George Henry. Cheltenham is not far from Bath, and it was known that George Henry's lady-love lived at Cheltenham. Moreover, he was now playing truant from Bath society, her sister told her. It was all very well for him to say that he was prepared to marry even at the sacrifice of his own inclinations, but that he knew no young Catholic ladies in Bath. 'But have you been to Mrs. Pellewards?' she retorted. There she had him; she had urged him more than once to cultivate Mrs. Pelleward, who had several young Catholic girls under her wing, including the aristocratic Miss de Trafford. 'I am not certain', came his reply, 'which Miss Trafford it was I once saw at Mrs. Pellewards! I really forget what sort of a person she was so that I have no prejudices to surmount; therefore I am afraid if my memory serves me right that her charms are rather below the surface. As for any further evasion of the subject on my part I must protest against any assumption that I have at any time done so . . . nor will I make any promise about returning to Cheltenham or to any other place . . . I will promise not to deceive you . . . I will sacrifice much of my own inclinations to please you. If Mrs. Pelleward gives another invitation, *I will accept it* and if the result does not answer your expectation, it will not be for want of a *fair* and honourable disposition on my part to please you. . . .'

There was no deception, he said, but he must be allowed to call his soul his own.

The post at Moore Hall brought no word of an engagement; and when next George Henry was heard of, he was off to Italy. Of this trip there is no record, except that he carried a letter of introduction, given him by Augustus's head master, to the young Nicholas Wiseman of the English College at Rome, whose claim to bear the title of first Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster in the Roman hierarchy of England he was afterwards to champion in Parliament.[1] Logan wrote of George Henry: 'He possesses great abilities and considerable knowledge and did he possess any literary ambition would I have no doubt very much distinguish himself . . . He was educated at Oscott and I have no doubt you have some with you who are personally acquainted with him . . . a brother of his is now studying mathematics with me — he really is a prodigy — Professor Hamilton of Dublin, no bad authority, declares he never met one of his age possessing so extensive a knowledge of pure analysis — it is very rare to meet with two brothers of distinguished ability.'

On his return from Italy George Henry continued in recrimination with his mother, and this, together with the unhappy love-affair, drove him into a mood of desperate if elegant disillusionment, after the fashion of Byron. 'The heart — my heart,' he says in one letter,

[1] In connection with Lord John Russell's anti-Popery Bill of 1857.

'A fig for the phrase!' It was almost inevitable, therefore, that he should decide to vanish into the glamorous east, there to do or die in the service of science; his early poems show that the east had long fascinated him.

'Dear Madam,' Hugh Hammersley wrote to Mrs. Moore on 2nd January, 1835, 'I have received the favour of your letter of the 29th of December, that to which you refer to our house disputing a credit for Mr. George Moore. I merely mentioned that we had no correspondent in Persia but that whenever he was settled we could establish for him a credit for £100 a quarter as you wished, but that for persons moving about our Circular notes were preferable; this credit however we can of course only give when we have correspondents and we have none more to the East than Constantinople.

'I have seen it mentioned in a paper that an Embassy was going to Persia, but more than that I don't know about it, I have therefore thought it best to send your letter to Mr. Scott at the Foreign Office. When I had written so far I thought it best to go and speak to Mr. Scott about the Persian Embassy and he told me its departure was very uncertain as to time, I therefore gave him your letter which he said he would send together with others to the care of the British Minister at Constantinople. So then I will add one from our house containing £100 in our Circular notes for which

I will beg you to order a remittance to be sent to us, as your order of payment to Mr. Metcalfe nearly absorbs Mr. Moore's balance. I beg to present my compliments to him and remain Dear Madam, Your most humble servant, Hugh Hammersley.'

The great design of the traveller was exploration of the Dead Sea, of which Europeans then knew little except what they could recall from the Biblical stories. Two years before this Moore's compatriot, Costigan, had died of exhaustion whilst making what was in effect the first modern expedition to this region; and it may well be that Moore hardly expected to return, for the belief was then generally entertained that the exhalations rising from the lake were fatal to life. Moore delayed upon his road; for a considerable time in Russia, in the Caucasus, and he stopped in Persia and then wheeled back to the west, for visits to Constantinople, Athens, and the Greek Isles. His companion at the start was Charles Kirwan of Galway. A notebook kept by Moore records that the two Irishmen were guests for a while at the Countess of Orloff's stud farm, where there were boxes for 1500 horses, and that at the end of November they had reached Tiflis. In the following spring Teheran welcomed them.

The record then ceases for nearly two years, and there are no letters. Pages from Moore's travel-diary are in fact cut out at this point. They would apparently

have shown how having been notified by the Cheltenham lady that with her husband she was following him to the East, he retraced his steps towards Europe to meet them at Constantinople. There is evidence, other than the torn pages of the diary, for an episode which George Henry's son, George Moore the Fourth, once summed up as 'very wrong ethically but from a literary point of view, how felicitous, how Byronic'.

We do not know what passed between the lady and Moore in Athens and the Greek Isles, but it is certain that at their parting Moore felt himself betrayed. This reflection is found in a later entry of the diary: 'The love of a woman, that but yesterday seemed passionate and eternal, may to-day have passed, like a shadow on the waters, from her false and reckless heart; but a mother's love lives on alike through storms and sunshine, follows to the grave and the throne alike with unchanged and unchangeable devotion; and yet for how vile a thing would I once have betrayed my mother's heart.'

CHAPTER VI

ENTER MARIA EDGEWORTH

All at Moore Hall — and, in particular, the historian in his library — were rendered happier by the fact that George Henry was now at a distance which precluded his mother from being continually recipient of disquieting signals and intimations concerning him.

A lately made but warm friendship with the most celebrated woman in Ireland, Maria Edgeworth, had brought a new and delightful interest into the somewhat lonely lives of the second George Moore and his wife. The novelist's home, Edgeworthstown, was but fifty miles from Moore Hall, on the coach road between Dublin and Westport, and since both Moores and Edgeworths were birds of a strange feather in the Irish landlord class, they ought to have met sooner. But the historian had lived so retired and modest a life that Miss Edgeworth, upon finding a flattering reference to a young George Moore in some lately published reminiscences by Sir James Mackintosh, asked could it be the same person as the Mayo gentleman of that name. When she heard that this was so, she at once asked a common friend, Mr. Strickland of Lough Glynn, in Roscommon, to forward their acquaintance.

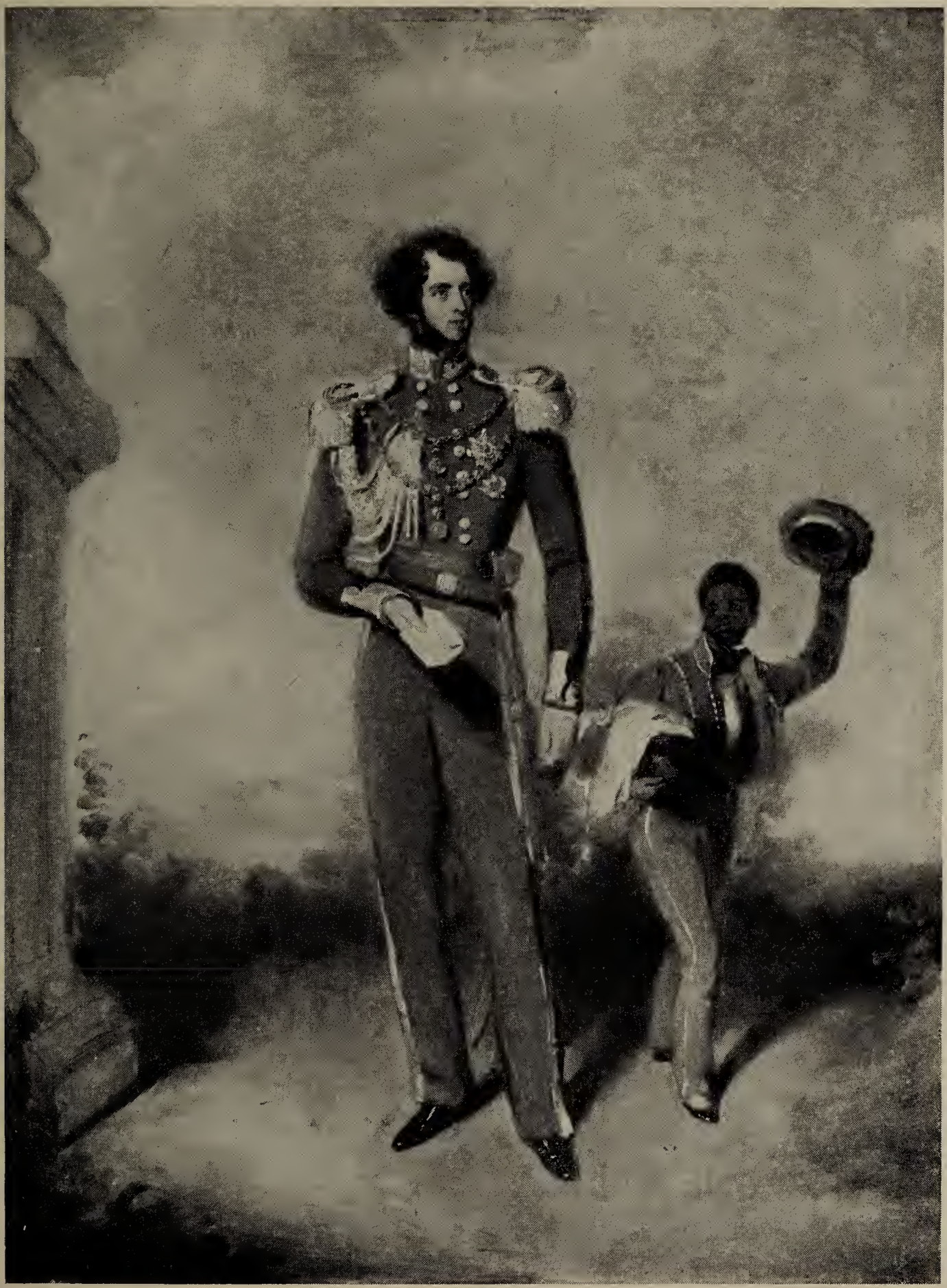
Maria was now approaching her seventieth year. The foundations of her literary fame had been laid as far back as 1787. She had known Paris before the Napoleonic wars, when a mention of her father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Rousseau's friend, had opened all doors to her. A little later she had been the much sought after blue-stocking of a London season. Much was now lost in a haze of sunken years; even the long and delightful labour of educating the families of her three step-mothers was over. But age had brought no decline in her powers of sympathy with others, or in her understanding. With the third of her step-mothers, she kept up the homely country house over which that pedagogue of genius, her father, had once presided. Sometimes still she went to London, and to Edgeworthstown there continued to flow that stream of inquiring visitors from all nations, which had first risen as far back as 1768 when the eccentric Englishman, Thomas Day, had asked Richard Lovell to take him to Ireland in order that he might indulge his deep-seated prejudice in favour of savage life.

Besides a *Treatise of Reasoning* and *A History of the British Revolution*, George Moore had now to his credit *Lives* of Pombel and Riperda and a number of moral tales; Miss Edgeworth borrowed the *British Revolution* from the Stricklands, and approved highly of the epilogue following the account of the siege of Limerick, that completion of the Revolution, in which the

author exhorted the landlords of Ireland to reside upon their estates and to cultivate the affection and respect of the people. The pleasure the late Lord Sligo felt on reading his history in his tenants eyes was, she said, 'beautifully done', and the infirm health of that nobleman had added to the striking effect of the picture.

Their meeting took place at the Stricklands, and at about the same time the young Augustus made himself known to Maria's half-sister Mrs. Butler, wife of the Rector of Trim, who formed a high opinion of his abilities. The Edgeworths were then invited to Moore Hall; but it was not easy for them to come, because they had with them an old aunt, Miss Sneyd, nearly ninety, a sister of two of R. L. Edgeworth's wives.

'. . . But from day to day we are seeing you', wrote Miss Edgeworth to the historian, 'or rather from night to night — in the memoirs of your celebrated friend, Sir James Mackintosh . . . And since we cannot have the honour of waiting upon you would you do us the honour of calling upon us at Edgeworthstown. I say calling because I would not put you to the trouble of coming on purpose. Only when you do take a journey to Dublin or anywhere when you can contrive to take us in your way, remember that Edgeworthstown is on the high road to Dublin and Mr. Strickland can tell you that we are always obliged by friends who can make it convenient to themselves to give us a day or



LORD MULGRAVE, LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND, 1835

two or even an hour or two upon their journeys. We do not like some (very much their own enemies) estimate the honour and satisfaction of a visit by the inconvenience to which it puts the person paying it. Instead of insisting on our friends coming on purpose, we are heartily glad if it answer their purpose to take us in their way. Will you with our best thanks to Mrs. Moore for her kind postscript to your letter assure her of this and assure her moreover that if she will have the goodness to give us this proof of her desire to be acquainted with us she shall be perfectly at home here whenever she can come she shall not find strangers who will expect her to unpack dress for dinner etc. etc., but shall be completely at ease and at liberty and shall not have company asked to meet you — unless you desire it nor Turbot unless you prefer it particularly. In short you shall see us just as we are every day, if you please . . .'

Shortly after this George Moore found an opportunity to 'call' at Edgeworthstown. He brought his wife with him, but not his son, which disappointed Miss Edgeworth because 'we are so fond of young people, and so accustomed to them that this house now seems bereft without them'. The historian having invited Miss Edgeworth's interest in his coming *magnum opus: A Historical Memoir of the French Revolution*, the conversation turned largely on the possibilities of further research into Mirabeau's career.

They must come again, said Miss Edgeworth, and with Augustus, and the next time they came she would invite Sir William Rowan Hamilton. Augustus was doing extraordinarily well. So enchanted was Mrs. Moore by Maria's genuine interest in Augustus that she began to confide her hopes and fears for her other son to this new and distinguished correspondent. Hopes were now in the ascendant, for George Henry's letters from the East manifested a knowledge and an appreciation of ancient art and history quite unusual in one so young.

In 1836 Wiseman visited Ireland in order to found, with Daniel O'Connell's help, *The Dublin Review*. Young Augustus acted as one of his hosts and brought the future Cardinal-Archbishop down to Moore Hall. Maria Edgeworth would have liked to meet this rising celebrity; she was very tolerant in matters of theology, and she asked Augustus would he not stop with Wiseman at Edgeworthstown on the way back to Dublin. It was a compliment; Walter Scott and Wordsworth had been among her recent visitors. But Augustus could not manage it; he was busy preparing for the continental tour which was to precede his going to Cambridge. For this Miss Edgeworth furnished the intending traveller with letters of introduction. She introduced him to Mrs. Marcel of Geneva as 'a young man of uncommon abilities' and to Prince Edmund de Beauveau in Paris as 'not of the poet's race of the Moores, but of more ancient and aristo-

cratic Moores. He has a brother who has travelled over Russia and Egypt and who has been well received by the Emperor of Russia'.

In September of the same year, the Edgeworths were at last able to find their way to Moore Hall. When they came with Mrs. Butler and the Dean, Mrs. Moore had excursions prepared for them; she took the party to Westport to view the Atlantic — it was late in the evening, and the sea, the mountains, and islands, was a glorious sight. On another day all except Mr. Moore went across the lake (in part of which the water for a short pace was black as ink) to Castle Carra, the view from which was very beautiful, but the ruin had that peculiar melancholy air of modern decay which often adheres to houses abandoned within the memory of man. 'A large house', was the Dean's description of Moore Hall itself, 'built by Mr. Moore's father, who had lived all his life in Spain and made a balcony from an upper window to sit in, he said, to enjoy of the cool of the evening — overhanging a lake in the far west of Ireland, where he may have rejoiced in sunshine when it came, but had probably more occasion to shun than to welcome the breeze he had imagined as so grateful while residing in Seville [*sic*].'

We may imagine the entertainment in the house: the food plentiful and nutritious, not much wine, the servants rather unwashed and boorish but respectable from long length of service, the long and

serious conversations in the evening in the drawing-room or library by waxlight, a late innovation, the appreciated criticism of Wyatt's recent portrait of the white haired highbrowed historian. The Dean, an Oxford man was, in particular, much edified by all that he heard and saw. He had always sought the society of open-minded Catholics, and his talks with the Moores, and particularly with George Moore, recalled to him the theory which he had held in his youth, namely that a reformation not *from*, nor *in*, but *of* the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland might be possible. He had then thought that the men of sense and enlightened understandings among them — and his host at Moore Hall was a case in point — would be willing to slip away from Roman peculiarities, and virtually to be Protestants, although still retaining the name of Roman Catholics. He did not put it in so many words to George Moore; but they deplored together the strange fashion that had grown up since their youth of baiting all parties into consistency by ever recurring to first principles and rejecting compromise and common sense.

'My dear Mrs. Moore,' Miss Edgeworth wrote, on her return home. 'You so kindly expressed your wish to hear of our safe arrival at our home that I will not delay to write. Our journey ended most fortunately . . . without any accident that could leave one disagreeable impression to spoil the taste of all the

pleasure we enjoyed at Moore Hall. Our post horses did not like the ups and downs in their newly stoned roads and were so much fatigued that we could not but be compassionate and get out and walk at every *threatening* hill and they regularly stopped to give us time and warning to manifest our good inclinations and to carry them into action without which good inclinations are good for nothing you know but in going to a place where I hope we shall never go. We were very lucky after all in getting any horses, as all but this pair were engaged carrying people to a dinner given at Ballaghadereen to Lord Dillon. His lordship went to his dinner accompanied by Charles Strickland and we had the whole day at Loughglyn with Harriet and Kate Strickland and William and the young ones to ourselves . . . which was all as we could have wished. No offence to the absent.

'We found my aunt Mary Sneyd had not been quite well — nothing worse. But still at her age a cold makes a great change and every change is alarming. Honora too had a headache which confined her to her bed all yesterday and to-day, so that we should have had reason to reproach ourselves if we had suffered ourselves to be persuaded by your united eloquence and kindness to prolong our pleasures at Moore Hall.

'Mrs. Sneyd desires particularly to be remembered to you, and begs that I will express that she feels really obliged for the kind interest which you showed about her and for the enquiries you so particularly made after

her health. She says she thinks she had no right to expect such attentions. Perhaps that is one reason why they are paid her with so much pleasure by persons of discernment and good feeling.

'We took care to tell her of Mr. Moore's taking the trouble to return to the drawing-room that last night when he was so unwell, on purpose to give his message of remembrance to Mrs. Mary Sneyd. We knew it would gratify her — and it did.

'Mr. and Mrs. Butler desire me to give you their kind thanks for your attentions and for the very happy time they spent with you. Mrs. Edgeworth she must thank you for herself and I resign my pen — a bad one which she will mend. Your obliged and affectionate Maria Edgeworth.'

After the Moore Hall visit the correspondence between Edgeworths and Moores increased in volume. So many topics had been raised on which there was much more to be said, and, most notably, Maria was eager to be kept acquainted with the course of Augustus's career. Not being a woman of science, she could scarcely furnish the Moores with advice about the course at Cambridge; but she knew Adam Sedgwick, Woodward Professor of Geology, and she heartily recommended the young man to this (in her opinion) the most agreeable of the Cambridge 'philosophers'.

On the historian's behalf she communicated with

Baron Delepest in Paris for his opinions on the French Revolution:

'He has answered most cautiously', she reported, 'as if he feared that the powers would read his letters at the post-office, and that the present King of the French should have a feeling for his own father, which 10 to 1 he has not. I believe all the first set of Jacobins or revolutionists by whatever name met at the Palais Royal and if not paid for massacres were no doubt paid for disturbances and revolution which his R.H. or serene highness (believed) would end in placing him or his family on the throne.'

The Baron, however, sent a full list of the authoritative books; with most of these George Moore was already acquainted. Ready as she was with help and sympathy for every claimant, Miss Edgeworth seems to have found the historian a little over-pertinacious; the trait descended to his grandson, a more successful man of letters, who showed such skill in using others and used to say: *Je prends mon bien ou je le trouve.* She protests in one letter that she is not 'like Faust of Avicenna, and possessed of means of beckoning books, or having them brought to hand by some spirits to the library and genii of the lamp'. George Moore was much indebted to her for choices of new facts and reflections upon old ones. Every day now he sat down to his task, for he felt that his strength was quickly ebbing away, and that little time remained

to him. But new facts, new reflections, kept on presenting themselves, to be jotted down on the blank pages which faced every written page of his *Historical Memoirs of the French Revolution*. Though he had made a will by which £500 was left to defray the expenses of publication, his MS. was not yet definitive, and he had suffered a paralytic stroke. On his sixty-fourth birthday (August 20th, 1837) he dictated but did not finish the Preface in which this pathetic passage occurs:

> I have had no celebrity in my life. But a prospect of posthumous fame pleases me at this moment. I may say with Erasmus: Illud certe praesagio, de meis lucubrationibus, qualescum-que sunt, candidius judicaturam posteritatem, though I cannot add with him: Tametsi nec de meo seculo queri possum. Having missed the applause . . . and even notice of my age, I ought perhaps to be indifferent about the opinion of those that follow; their applause should I ever gain it, will not reach me when the grave has closed over me. This is true; but we are so made that while we are still living we think with pleasure that we shall not be forgotten after our deaths.

CHAPTER VII

STORMS OVER MAYO

Among the other entertainments provided for Maria Edgeworth's party during their visit to Moore Hall was the reading aloud by Mrs. Moore of George Henry Moore's latest communications from the East. Not one of these letters remains. But his travel-diaries, though perhaps the most interesting pages are torn from them, reveal a remarkable breadth of interests and information. It was indeed, as Miss Edgeworth observed, uncommon to find both judgment and imagination united in one so young, such enlarged views, such power of generalizing without precipitation or mistakes of date, tiresomeness of detail or want of proportion. Maria Edgeworth admired, too, the pen and pencil sketches which adorned the letters, and with good reason if they were as felicitous as the illustrations to the diaries, a water-colour portrait of a Sheikh's sister and the many drawings of camels, to be highly approved years later when brought before the eye of the fourth George Moore, an art critic. 'Ruskin would have admired these severe outlines, and my father's portrait of the Sheikh's sister would attract notice in any exhibition by the sincerity of the drawing and some remarkable handling of water colours.'

In a passage of the diary the traveller is at Bussora in the Hanran; he is seen working all day among the ruins of the old town, drawing up a plan of the Saracenic fortifications, which he compares with the Castel Pisano at Jerusalem. George Henry's goal, as has been said, was the Dead Sea; for the task of exploration he bought a boat at Beirut, and with a comrade named Beck transported it on mules through the desert. Beck and he spent a fortnight on the western shore of the lake, were nearly wrecked in a storm and finally had to retreat from their purposes owing to a rebellion which broke out among the tribes on the east and south-east shore. He was able to contribute a useful report to the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, and later on Miss Edgeworth recommended his work to the notice of the Hydographer of the Admiralty. But he came home in a mood of bitter disillusionment, his return accelerated by the news of his father's illness.

It was hoped that he would now settle down to a quiet life and be able to exercise some power over his emotions. But he was one of those unhappy natures, which, as Spinoza says, must either be agitated by external causes, or cease to be. While in Syria, his young attendant Dmitri, had noticed how he 'moped' when alone. 'If I were in your place', said the boy, 'I would have riding parties, supper parties; I would have music, wine and dancing girls, instead of going to die on the shores of the stupid Dead Sea.' But

George Henry was no more Sybarite than Spinozan saint; he could not treat life as a pleasant party among wine cups and roses — at bottom he was a controversialist, a rationalist, a moralist.

Both his mother and Maria Edgeworth (to whom he was quickly introduced) urged him to seek fame by writing. But when they read aloud to him his own letters, all he said to them was that rather than hear them read to him again he would forfeit 100 guineas. As it had happened when he returned from Cambridge to Ireland, so it happened when he came back to Ireland from the East — nothing seemed to amuse him but horses and the company of racing men. Maria was vexed; here was a young man who could write a Book of Travels which would earn hundreds of pounds, and yet he seemed resolved to sleep upon his adventures. 'Either he does desire to make himself famous, or he does not. If he does not he is a poorer minded boy than I think him and I have nothing to say.' The argument continued for years, and at last George Henry got so sick of the whole matter that he destroyed all his letters from the East, and he would have destroyed the note-books too, if his mother had not hidden them away. They were discovered years later amid the rubbish of an attic.

It was not that George Henry's mind degenerated, or that he ever lost interest in the life of the intellect; throughout his life he seemed always abreast of contemporary philosophy, literature and art, and

could hold his own on these subjects in any society in Victorian London. He bought almost as many books as his father, and though he was seldom seen to read for any length of time, he appeared to be able to inform himself at a glance of their contents. Literature so accumulated at Moore Hall that George Moore's library had eventually to be extended so as to take in all the guest rooms at the back of the house on the ground floor. George Henry's tastes however, were formed young and never much modified; in art for instance he required romantic colour and subject and classic drawing; and his later renovations to Moore Hall were out of harmony with the finely proportioned hall and its Adam ceiling. On a later visit to London he met Millais, whose friendship he retained to the end of his life, while deploring that so wonderful a painter should associate himself with a monstrous affectation like pre-Raphaelitism. Delaroche, Armytage, Landseer, he also esteemed, and at the Great Exhibition he was particularly attracted by Landseer's 'Dialogue at Waterloo', with its anecdote of the little Flemish girl who tried to sell a guide book to the Duke, quite unconscious of how unnecessary it would be to him.

But the love of horses dominated him and this passion was shared, and carried to even greater excess by the mathematical Augustus, who had now come down from Trinity College, Cambridge, after astonishing everyone by the style and power of his

reasoning. Graves in his *Life of Sir W. Rowan Hamilton* says of him:

> Having commenced the study of mathematics only two years before, he had advanced with astonishing strides into the highest regions of analytic research, and displayed much power of original investigation. It was predicted by both Hamilton and Peacocke, that if he proceeded as he began he could scarcely fail to be eminent. But the condition was not fulfilled. He pursued his studies zealously for a time and in the year 1837 he contributed to Cambridge Phil' Transactions a paper 'On the Explanation of a Difficulty in Analysis Noted by Sir W. Rowan Hamilton.' Afterwards he seems to have turned his attention to other subjects.

The 'other subjects' were racing, hunting and horse-training. Mayo had the same influence upon Augustus as upon George Henry in discouraging any ambition but excellence in horsemanship. The priggish conceit which had been Augustus's 'note' at Priors Park developed into the arrogance of some aristocrat in a fable. He was proud as Lucifer, and there was no whim he would deny himself; if a groom or servant displeased him, he would knock the man down and give him a sovereign afterwards. The notion that he should earn a living never crossed his mind, and, with less expectations, he was even more reckless with money than George Henry. Women liked him, and Maria Edgeworth, though his life seemed like a

mockery of one of her moral tales, would never hear an ill word spoken of him; she preferred him to his elder brother.

Bridget Kelly, one of the maids, who lived to be the oldest servant at Moore Hall, used to say sixty years later, showing how glory had departed, that 'when Mrs. Lynch came to see Mrs. Moore we lit the drawing-room fire with bank notes'. She always insisted that it was true, and it is quite possible that on Mrs. Lynch's arrival — especially if they did not want her to come again — Augustus or George Henry may have handed bank notes to Bridget for the fire, saying that this was their customary way of evincing their respect to a distinguished visitor, for Augustus, in particular, had a flair for practical jokes. For the elder son it should be said that he had made, or was making, an effort to keep out of debt. Among the family papers there is a note of the financial record of the heir to Moore Hall, dated 1832-1838. In all this time George's allowance had remained at £400 per annum, and at the end he owed only a trifle over £1000, not so bad for a rich man's son who had conducted an expedition to the Dead Sea, and spent the Coronation season in London.

'I wish much to know', Miss Edgeworth wrote to his mother, 'whether a season in London has inclined Mr. G. Moore to the young and fair living world or to the old Dead Sea. And seriously I want to know what

became of the paper he was to write for the Geographical Society.

'Did he give his cup to Lady Lansdowne. Did he ever dine there? Or did he see no more of them than at that first interview. I had a very agreeable letter from Lord Lansdowne the other day just after the Coronation in which he rejoiced at that gorgeous turmoil being over and observed that nothing is so tedious as the business of pleasure.

'The multitude of foreigners that poured in upon them he describes as quite overpowering, not by dozens but hundreds and from all parts of the world.

'Was Mr. Moore present at the dinner given to Herschel? I hope he is acquainted with him. Mr. Augustus Moore probably knows him particularly as being the great friend of Sir William Hamilton.'

The season did George Moore no good, and he was in a black mood during the winter, except when stimulated by the excitement of the chase. Mrs. Moore was much troubled, what with her paralysed husband in the house and her sons (when they were at home) neck-or-nothing riding across country. Miss Edgeworth urged patience and tolerance. 'I hope', she said in one letter, 'that all the five hunters are well if it is possible that five hunters should be well. If so be, what a Phoenix of a groom your sons must have'. But it seemed to Mrs. Moore that both her sons were in alliance against her, and she allowed herself much

licence of complaint, while objecting if anyone else subjected either of the young men to a breath of criticism. She could hardly forgive her kinsman, the second Lord Sligo, who put in a word for George Henry, accompanied by a criticism of Augustus. Augustus, Lord Sligo said, was not adaptable like his brother, who had 'profited by seeing the world'. Augustus, Lord Sligo had regretted to notice, was boorish, and would fly out even against his brother, who was always 'so mild and affectionate towards him'.

The year 1839 stands out in Irish annals for the great storm which visited the country on the night of January 6th — the 'Big Wind' it was still called sixty years later by claimants for Old Age Pensions, whose descriptions of it were often accepted as a substitute for their birth certificates. At Moore Hall some irreplaceable trees went for ever, but it was a tribute to the builder that little damage beyond broken windows was done to the mansion itself during that terrible night, when castles as well as the poorest cabins were uprooted throughout Ireland.

A storm of the passions also made the year memorable for Moore Hall. It had its origin in the bargain which Mrs. Moore had struck when Joe MacDonnell, the horsecoper and twenty tumbler man, sold to her George Henry's promissory note for £400 at 50 per cent discount. Soon after his return from the East,

Moore and MacDonnell met again, providentially, so it seemed to the latter who, being short of cash, asked for a review of the circumstances in which he had given up the bond. It had been his impression, he said, when they had parted at Calais, that George Henry would some time find for him the £200 which he had lost by accepting Mrs. Moore's proposal. The horse had been well worth £400 and might he now expect an *ex gratia* payment? Had he had the money George Henry might have been willing to oblige; but he was 'broke' at the moment, and resenting the truculent attitude which his whilom friend adopted in the ensuing correspondence, and the assertion that the £200 was a debt of honour, he sent Charles Kirwan to call upon MacDonnell and asked for 'satisfaction'. George Henry was set upon fighting, but MacDonnell evaded the challenge and referred Kirwan to the self-styled and already notorious O'Gorman Mahon for explanations. Mahon — to give him his proper name — was an adventurer from County Clare who professed to have been a leader of South American revolutions, and had more lately swaggered in the French Court as a typical Milesian gentleman, such as one reads about in the pages of Thackeray and the Victorian novelists.

Mahon excused MacDonnell on grounds which Moore characterized as 'the quibbling and paltry ingenuity of a hired advocate'. Papers passed between Mahon and Kirwan, and when these were handed to

George Henry, the latter felicitously characterized Mahon as a swindler's bravo and invited him in turn to fight.

By some means or other the correspondence between Moore, Mahon and MacDonnell fell into the hands of a Mayo newspaper, which published it in full. Expressions taken at random from Moore's letters, such as 'the disgraceful cause with which you have associated yourself', 'Your paltry arrows', 'There is not one mind in which you will stand more degraded than your own', 'the insane rage of a baffled schemer', show that he was in thorough enjoyment of his state of righteous indignation; but it is hard to recognize in them the philosophical diarist of the Middle-East. The doughty Augustus not only stood at his brother's side, but sent a challenge on his own account to MacDonnell, on the ground that the latter had insulted his father in one of the published letters by referring to 'the family arrangements at Moore Hall'; this, MacDonnell pleaded later on, when he took an action against Augustus for criminal libel, was merely an allusion to the well-known fact that owing to the grave bodily infirmity of Mr. Moore, Mrs. Moore had for years almost exclusively managed the affairs of the family.

'My dear Mrs. Moore,' wrote Miss Edgeworth to Mrs. Moore, on April 8th, 'I am most sincerely sorry for you, and so is Mrs. Edgeworth, and everyone in this family with whom you are acquainted. I know it is

THE O'GORMAN MAHON

sad and poor comfort in any misfortune and especially in any anxiety to be offered sympathy. But what else have we to offer. Nothing alas! Ladies are no judges of the rights and wrongs of dealings or of bargains about horses. We can only hope that your son's appeal to the public will answer the purpose for which you say he has exposed himself to all this turmoil. With the consciousness of so good a motive much may be endured by man and gentleman, and much even by woman and mother. There are few people, either male or female, who have public spirit enough to expose themselves thus to such abuse and great and lasting inconvenience for the sake of public justice and from their own conviction that they are doing right whatever others say or think. You must have suffered dreadful suspense during the whole of that long protracted correspondence — and I can only conceive that with your strong feeling and affection for your son that affair must really have made you ten years older in health, strength and looks. But time will cover it all over and it will appear every day of less consequence, and when some new object for either of your much beloved sons rises before you, and that you see them on the high road to fame, literary or scientific, you will forget this little storm in a slop-basin, in a *County of Mayo slop-basin*, and you will wonder how it could have so engrossed your thoughts and unstrung your nerves.

'In the meantime I rejoice that your husband's nerves have not been shocked by what would have

been so painful to all his so highly sensitive and gentlemanlike feelings. Even to have seen his name in such transactions and such company is dreadful! I hope the length of the whole correspondence will prevent it getting into the English papers. Your obliged and affectionate Maria Edgeworth.'

The young men received loyal support from their mother throughout the first stages of the quarrel. Their father perhaps was now too ill to take much notice, and in any case it had long been his habit to say, whenever his wife brought any problem to him, 'Whatever you do, Louisa, must be right'. In the summer, when George Henry and Augustus went to Dublin to attend to the law case, Mrs. Moore became so assiduous in her advice and intervention that her elder son had to beg her to desist from writing to solicitors, lest by some indiscretion she would 'spoil everything'. The poor lady was dreadfully wrought up by this time, and the great dread of her life, which was that George Henry would make a degrading marriage, revived in full force. For some reason or other, whenever he was in Dublin she suspected an ulterior motive, although he always protested that that city offered no attractions to him. In his attempts to reassure her he now took up a light and bantering tone, which drove her near madness.

'Until this day', she wrote from Moore Hall on May 31st, 'I have been quite unequal to the exertion

of acknowledging your last two letters. This will therefore have the advantage of not being written "in a blind furious heat". . . .

'I have for the last two months tried to endure a disrespect of manner, hardly to be credited, but I reflected that you were unhappy, and tried to make allowance for your manner in that unhappiness. . . .

'Now however that you are enjoying yourself in the society your taste finds agreeable, and that I am remaining here alone with your Father with bitter spirits and without one human being to speak to I must request at all events to be spared insulting letters.

'In reply I shall only observe that I must have a most sanguine and persevering spirit, after the experience of the last twelve years, and all I since suffered in my feeling and my means from your uncontrollable temper, I should still hope for any influence where self-indulgence were in question.

'I must however regret that accompanying this independent feeling there was little of the right spirit and right price of independence. Had such been manifested those privations which your uncontrollable spirit obliged me to submit would have been spared me, and I would have been enabled to partake of some of the enjoyments which are around me.

'Your offer to come down for me is like your letter to MacDonnell. "I will give you no time for shirking" — To make a long story short say by return of post whether you will come up with me if I go down for

you. Yes or no — but speak plainly and without reserve or insinuations! Good God! What a letter from a son to a mother. I will however insist henceforth on being my own mistress likewise, and shall exercise my privilege in admitting to my House no company that your Father dislikes. I have within the last six months neglected his wishes and feelings in many ways from a wish to indulge you. If that Family do, as the servants say, come to Mayo after you, I shall *not admit them* and unless this lawsuit (about which I shall not ask any questions or offer any advice) brings you down to Mayo I should much prefer your accompanying Augustus to the Continent . . . Your father is much irritated at your neglect about the writing paper. Of course I only look on it as another straw to show how the wind blows. If he had read your last letter it is not about paper he would be thinking. I will spend no more money on stables or anything else . . .'

Happily the reconciliation between mother and son was as sudden as their quarrel.

'My dearest Mother', wrote George Henry to his mother a few days later. 'Augustus will accompany me to Mayo. I prefer taking the coach on Tuesday or Wednesday at all costs. Good-bye, my darling mother, and believe me that I feel deeply grieved at ever having any disputes or differences with one I love and venerate as I do you; and I feel it all the more now

that it is over, and the feelings of anger and pride, and I am afraid not a little temper, which partly caused them, have passed from my head. Give my most affectionate love to my father. Ever your affectionate child G. H. Moore.'

For a while Louisa Moore must have had nothing but good to say of her two sons, because we find Maria Edgeworth congratulating her in a letter of near date upon 'the happiness which is above all rubies', the happiness of being a mother to 'kind affectionate and grateful friends'.

The quarrel with MacDonnell and Mahon fizzled out in a melancholy Dublin law court. Neither could be brought to the point of fighting, and Augustus commented: 'They are best at that part of the science of duelling which precedes the actual meeting.' Nevertheless, it is interesting to notice that the legend of Mahon's prowess and courage persisted; indeed it grew and grew. Thirty-five years later he entered the House of Commons as an Irish Nationalist, and it was he who, appropriately enough, recommended the dubious Captain O'Shea to Parnell's attention for a Parliamentary vacancy in Co. Clare. The 'swindler's bravo', who now wore a long white beard, made a great impression on Mr. Gladstone, who took him, as Louis-Philippe and Talleyrand had once done, for a real Irish gentleman of the old school. 'No one', wrote T. P. O'Connor, 'can enumerate the number of

times he has been "out".' It is in fact doubtful whether Mahon had been once 'out' in the course of his life; but he soon scented — a curious confirmation of Augustus Moore's idea of him — the ambiguous relationship between Parnell and the O'Sheas, and when the Captain decided to call out Parnell in 1883 it was he who carried the message — this duel, too, failed to take place.

CHAPTER VIII

RIDING AND RACING

In September 1840 George Moore, the historian, died.

The bulk of the income from the Moore property in land, Moore Hall itself, Ashbrook and Ballintubber, was now George Henry's to do as he pleased with. But there were many charges on the inheritance; as far as can be judged from a memorandum drawn up by the widow soon after her husband's death, these charges capitalized amounted to £40,000. It is here shown that Mrs. Moore's mother-in-law, the former Miss Kelly of Alicante in Spain, was still living; she must have been a very old woman but she still drew interests on a sum of over £11,000. There was Mrs. Moore's own jointure and that of Augustus, two incomes of £500 a year, Augustus's share, as one would have expected, being already mortgaged. Furthermore, poor witless Uncle Peter had to be provided for ('and', Mrs. Moore noted, 'he is likely to live at the best for another ten years'). Nor was that all; for George Henry had anticipated his inheritance by taking out mortgages up to several thousands at five to six per cent. On the other side of the account, however, it was Mrs. Moore's belief that by transferring these mortgages from Irish to English hands

the interest could be considerably reduced, 'as the late arrangements for the peace of this kingdom may make money still more plentiful'. The security was good. The Ballintubber estate was now let for £1500 per annum but if out at grass should be let for £800 more. The old entailed estates produced an income of £1600, which should rise later on when new lettings were made. Lastly came 800 English acres of Moore Hall property, green ground as well as plantation and wood, the green ground stocked with cattle and sheep. They made and sold wool on the Moore Hall property and expected a turnover from the wool and the cattle of £1500 a year. That the Moore Hall grazing land was at present unlet should not prejudice a lender, Mrs. Moore thought, since at any time it would fetch £800 per annum in the market.

As George Henry Moore held figures and accounts in horror, he was quite ready to leave the administration of his father's will to his mother. She greatly needed a change after having watched over her husband in his long illness, and for the winter of 1840-41 and the greater part of the following summer, she was away from Moore Hall on visits to the lawyers in Dublin and in London and staying at various addresses in England. It appears that she left her sons short of ready money, while they waited for the will to be proved, entrusting the running of Moore Hall in her absence to two elder servants, Mayo peasants, William Mullowney and Mary MacDonald.

Mullowney seems to have combined the offices of steward and butler; he was also allowed to collect the rents of Ballintubber property and George Henry used to go to him when in money difficulties. It is probably to him that the allusion is made in one of Maria Edgeworth's letters to Mrs. Louisa Moore, which speaks of 'your (I hope) non pareil agent . . . curious, edifying and alas too characteristic of Ireland . . . 40 gns taken from those wretched tenants it is beyond anything my wickedest imagination could have conceived for a bad Irish agent (*vide* Jane Quirke in my *Castle Rackrent*)'. The man at all events was always near disgrace; but the family had never the heart to dismiss him.

George Henry and Augustus were continually back and forth in the months following their father's death, and one charge put upon Mullowney by Mrs. Moore was that he should keep horse-copers and other swells-out-of-elbows from effecting an entrance into Moore Hall. A clever fellow was William, and he used to make the point that such bad reports of himself as came to his mistress's ears were spread by the lying tongues of those undesirable companions against whom he strove to protect Mr. George and Mr. Augustus.

'Now,' he wrote to Mrs. Moore in London, 'I will send you a full copy of my book since the day you went off. I shall first send you list and amount of cash received for them and to whom I sold, and the

wool in itself all in one and then the balance of the May rent that was due before you went off that in itself and then the November — also in self — and Threadsmen and Housekeeping and everything that you may see planly as I did not lose a day and calling on William Molloy . . . and still the weather is as bad that we can work and in two days after you receive this you shall have the other so as that I hope in God it will be to your satisfaction the coppy of whole account and to a show that you may dout me in what a gentleman told you there is a good many of them by name but very little to be choosen. if I was very liberal and good to gentlemen when they come to Moore Hall I might have a good name but I must take the will for the deed. Our great God carried his cross and it is a poor and dreadful thing to meddle with a servant is earning his bread night and day but I thank my God I have respect for my situation than you may think I have and now you may hold to my wages until you see my accounts settled to your satisfaction and about £62 0. 0. I am not speaking of what you promised me in Ballintubber but I hope you will pay me interest . . . I see you pay other servants up to the day. I cannot find out how you can find fault with me and it grieves me after all my trouble however there is no end to it all. I did not neglect Mr. George's business I have all Ballintubber and Ballybanron noticed for the rent this ten days.

'I am this night heart scalded and then I know how

troubled you must be writing so far and not getting an answer to your satisfaction there is also £6 stopped for the May rents for the MacDermots. You speak of arrears you know I missed nothing with them . . . you may see how hard I spent my time without anyone to help me and if you have any dout on your mind that I would not do for Mr. George as I did for you God knows all and believe me he wants me for he is too Honourable for the people of this world and he knows as I often told him that if he did not look sharp that his property would know the difference and indeed he told me he would and when I told him the advantage that would be taken of his lands if someone did not look after it — and also his groves if he did not look well to what would be wanted and that he should return when the bills would be paying. My wages is about sixty two pounds up to 23rd. of last May.

'Your very Humble Servant

Will Malowney.'

'I have been uneasy about you but it is better to have a trouble in this world than in the next.'

This is another letter from below stairs which reached Mrs. Moore in England:

'Moore Hall,
11th May, 1841

'Madam,

'I hope you are safe in Dublin by this time. I am sorry to tell you that Mary McDonnell is not well

and she never would be able to stand the hate of the kitchen and that you and the gentlemen might be dispointed in coming home without a cook but you will be better able to judge when you see her. She has a very good kitchen made which is Mariha Hammilton and if she can do anything in the world a way from the fire at any time you think her fit she would be happy to do so — when ever she goes in the heat she gets faintish and treamor and now is very well only she can not get read of the great pains in her head and down her face and she thinks if she gets weak in the kitchen again she never will over come it. She would give all the world to see an sight of you in Moore Hall you would than see what she could do. She has no apitate what ever it is a month since she was anointed and we did not think she would live a moment the priest gave her up for death — the horses came all home safe on Sunday the 9th there is letters for Mr. George and 2 from you to him. I do not know what to do with them. I have sent the gray mare and the Brioff mare to Blacklock again — I was at the Fair of Tuam yesterday and was a bad fair. However I sold my heifers — I sent the receipt through Mr. Ormsby just as you ordered —

'Your very humble Servant
Wm. Malowney.'

'There is great Distemper in this country among cattle. Thank God none of mine took it as yet. I have 26 of the heifers sold this long time.'

One of Mrs. Moore's errands in London was the finding of a publisher for her late husband's *Memoir of the French Revolution*; but she seems to have forgotten to bring the manuscript books with her, and there are long letters from poor Mullowney who with Betty, the cook's sister, was set to dig out the papers from various old trunks. When the manuscript books at last reached her she turned for assistance in the matter to Miss Edgeworth who was herself at this time in London.

'Dear Mrs. Moore,' Miss Edgeworth replied, 'I had understood that you wished not only to have the MS. read and collated to see where one part is merely a copy of the other, but that you also wished it completely prepared for the press. I thought you would with this view leave it to the judgment of your gentleman critic and corrector to abridge, i.e. to cut out repetitions. . . .

'I should think this would be a great service and would be the most likely to obtain what you desire i.e. a favourable reception and lasting posthumous fame for yourself and the author. (D'Alembert has well said that "*L'auteur se tue a alonger ce que le lecteur se tue a abrèger.*" The reader gives great credit to the writer who saves him this trouble.

'As I have never seen the book under consideration you know this cannot be meant for more than a general observation. I know I was always very thank-

ful to my father for abridging for me . . . Yours obliged, Maria Edgeworth.'

Lockhart, Scott's biographer, was asked his opinion. What would John Murray charge for causing the manuscript to be read and corrected by an experienced and clever man? Five guineas perhaps? Lockhart explained that Murray would never dream of offering 5 guineas, or even 10 or 20, to a man of education for skilled work of this kind. Furthermore, the words of the will when carefully considered read as though the testator wished that nothing should be published which he had not put in his last copy.

There was therefore very good excuses for dropping what would have been a most troublesome business.

'I sympathise with your disappointment my dear Mrs. Moore,' Maria Edgeworth wrote in the autumn of 1841, 'and deplore all the trouble you have taken in vain . . . His son and you might at your leisure look it over and satisfy yourselves as to its state *edited* by his son would be very well if his son should see fit . . . I daresay you and his son could read the MSS. well enough and it will engage your attention and be perhaps the most interesting occupation you could form for yourself. Even supposing that you did not look to publication still it would be very soothing to your affection and veneration, and there would be the pleasing feeling all the time that you were doing what he would like could his spirit hover near. . . .'

Mrs. Moore was very unhappy at the time for she did not know what she was going to do with herself in her widowhood. At a moment when her distress reached an acute stage it even seemed to her that she might do well to enter a convent. During her stay at Hastings, George ran down to see her, and she was bitterly hurt that he only remained for a few hours. She consulted her unmarried and badly off sister, Anne Brown, who was none too sympathetic. It was largely her own fault, Anne told her in effect. True, George always acted from impulse, and insisted on being amused; but if a mother wished to enjoy the son's society she 'must not indulge in the doleful'. 'Mothers must submit to much when sons become men'.

'What have you done about your carriage,' Miss Browne's letter continued. 'I should sell it where I bought and buy a good second-hand English one, and as to your being puzzled what you should do with yourself look my dear Louise at all the women similarly situated as yourself. Few have children living with them. Montague Square is occupied by single women who divide and enjoy whatever income they possess . . . I confess it would mortify me your being seen without your own carriage and respectable looking servants, even the Holdens keep up a little appearance and have a very pretty carriage. I have private apartments in a house that is a boarding one

in London where I am provided with everything at 50/- a week . . . This place would not suit you in any one respect. There is no chance of ever meeting mortal but the inhabitants, most of them, are affluent (their fathers having been in business) know no one out of Lyme . . . I think our Lady Abbess friend much too mean. I think if you had given one pound to the chapel along with the tea it would have been quite sufficient.'

'Go back to Moore Hall and occupy your mind in putting things in order,' was Anne Browne's advice, and this was what her sister finally did. Her good-natured son asked nothing better than that she should keep house for him; it was lonely enough for her when she returned, in October 1841, for she found that both Augustus and George were away hunting at Melton Mowbray. Were they ever to be more than mere riders for life and death . . . or fashion or wagering? That was the question which Maria Edgeworth and she were continually asking. When would the two young men cease to be carried by the horse fever off the course of literature and science for which they were so eminently endowed? Miss Edgeworth could not but believe that they would be quit for a few hundred pounds thrown away upon jockeys and a broken bone or two. In the meantime Mrs. Moore herself turned to literature and occupied her leisure by preparing a *Life of Christ* for the use of the young. It was not a

LOUISA MOORE (NÉE BROWNE)

work either of exegesis or of romantic imagination, but simply a putting together of the events recorded in the Gospels in continuous order without interpretation or alteration. She had the permission of her Bishop in the task; and the liberal-minded Protestant and dogmatic indifferentist, who was Miss Edgeworth, discovered in the Bishop's approval a most heartening sign of the times. For was it not notorious that nothing kept Protestants and Catholics so much at variance as the belief of the former in the hostility of Catholics to the open Bible? Now it had been shown — and by one of the best informed and best educated ladies in Ireland — that the reading of the Scriptures 'without note or comment', was permitted and approved by the Roman Church.

George Henry and Augustus were back for Christmas at Moore Hall. Nothing could have been more charming and more considerate than their manners to their bereaved mother, and they observed with respect her manifestation of grief; every day she made a pilgrimage through the wood to Kiltoom, where her husband lay.

It is to be feared however that George Henry expressed no more than a polite interest in his mother's literary endeavour, and such success as the *Life of Christ* enjoyed was fugitive; the book was soon forgotten, even in the family circle. Nor was the anticipation of Maria Edgeworth fulfilled, that the late historian's sons would sit around the fireside on

winter's evenings, doing honour to their father's memory as they read aloud to each other, and to their mother, the *Memoir of the French Revolution*. The four great bound volumes were put away in the attic. Sometimes in coming years his grandchildren were to recall the pathetic wish of the unsuccessful historian for a little posthumous fame; but by that time it was no one's particular business to find £500, the sum set aside in the will for the expenses of publication.

CHAPTER IX

AUGUSTUS MOORE IS KILLED AT LIVERPOOL

The brothers went frequently to Melton; in Ireland they hunted chiefly with Lord Waterford in Tipperary and in Galway with Christopher St. George and the Blazers. Both George and Augustus were splendid riders. The more skilful was George, his son Colonel Maurice Moore has told us; he had the finer hands and as much determination and courage, nor did he lose his head and temper as quickly as the younger man who, once while hunting in Galway and being refused one of the high stone walls characteristic of that county, jumped off his horse and bound the animal's eyes with a kerchief so as to force him through, if not over the wall.

'It will cure itself', so ran one of Maria Edgeworth's letters to Mrs. Moore, 'and they will come to know their own better part and their more certain and better road to celebrity and even to fashion — for the fashion looks to talent and literature and science more than to hunting etc.'

The young men were no longer moving among the seedy half gentlemen, the Catholic squireens and gig-

men of Mayo; their prowess on horseback had won them a way into the fast aristocratic society at the head of which was the Lord Waterford whose scapegrace eccentricity and offences against all the maxims of prudence and common sense had earned him notoriety throughout the British Isles. 'The wild Marquess', as he was called, had lately leaped his horse over a gate in his hall set up on purpose by candle and firelight for a wager. What a waste of energy, talent and money it was, thought Miss Edgeworth, and how could Moore Hall hope to compete with Curraghmore at this game! Even prodigious fortunes found it hard work and continued misfiring. Racing and hunting apart, the chief occupation of the Waterford set was devising elaborate practical jokes to set the work-a-day world by the ears. It is probable that the arrogant Augustus felt more at home in such company than George; but Lord Waterford had a great fondness for George, and on one occasion nursed him back to health most tenderly after he had been almost crushed to death under a horse.

In the years after his father's death George's blue bird's-eye jacket was almost as familiar to English as to Irish racegoers. 'Wolf Dog Moore' he was called in England. The celebrated Boyce was his trainer at Newmarket, and Boyce's son often rode for him.

Salisbury in the Stand
Post leaves 5 and 3
miles from the town.

'Hon Sir.

'Happy to say Wm. Boyce won again very easy on Wolf Dog beating Mathematician and Miss Ellis and Antagonist. The horse is very fresh and I will have not time to say more as the man is ready to leave for the post.

'Your humble servant
H. Boyce.'

The Boyces must have made a good income out of the Irishman, even if accounts were sometimes in arrears. They knew his weak spot and flattered his vanity as a fine judge of a horse . . . 'Wolf Dog', so goes a letter from Newmarket which has been preserved, 'has quite lost his cough this long time and he is looking strong and well and in good spirits and action — he canters twice a day to keep him quiet. Wilmot is quite well. Fenvaragh's knee is quite well and I was in hopes you would have been here to have seen him before he left his paddock — My father wishes me to say he has expected to have heard from you — to say whether you found his accts correct. I have two of the best yearlings up to break — were you here I feel quite sure you would buy them by Cotherstone — one of Annette by Priam the other out of the Sheriff Dam, the best yearling I ever saw and very cheap. The

Duke of Rutland would buy but his Grace is on the Water for 6 weeks.'

Of Moore's various steeplechasers Anonymous was the best. This bay horse won the first steeplechase he ever started for over the Laraghbrian course in April 1841, and followed up the victory by winning over the walls at Tuam in a field of ten, with his owner as a pilot. He was again first in the New Melton Stakes at Cahir, a memorable steeplechase of the same year, when Moore and his brother won £1000 in bets besides the stakes. On the flat in Ireland during 1841 Moore was equally successful, for he rode four out of five winners at the Curragh. But in 1842, riding Tinderborn at Liverpool, he broke his collar-bone at a four-foot stone wall which had been put up to indulge the recklessness of the Irish competitors, and the next year Anonymous fell at Worcester and was fatally injured. A month later Moore lost another favourite, The Don, at the King's County and Ormond races.

As a result of The Don's death he promised never to ride again in a steeplechase. This was a great relief to Mrs. Moore, and he kept his word. But he continued to race on the flat, and in 1843 had the honour of being appointed steward of the Turf Club in succession to Lord Sligo. In October of the same year, riding for Lord Waterford, he met with the awful accident, already referred to, which called forth the better side of Lord Waterford's nature. Somewhat sobered no doubt, Augustus and he spent another

Christmas at Moore Hall; again we learn from one of Maria Edgeworth's letters, both young men showed particular kindness and consideration to their mother during the festival.

The records of the brothers' doings on the Turf during 1844 are scanty; but in March 1845 Augustus, who had made no promise to abstain from steeple-chases, went off in high hopes to ride a horse called Micky Free at Liverpool. He never returned. The course was hardened by frost, and riding at the hill below the brook with fury, Micky Free fell on the further bank and snapped his back; Augustus was carried off to hospital. George Henry, who had remained in Ireland, was walking on the afternoon of the race, down the avenue of Moore Hall with a cousin; both caught sight of a figure near the gate, seemingly that of Augustus; but the figure moved away as they advanced and then vanished into the bushes. The telegram announcing the accident came a few minutes later. George hurried to Liverpool and reached the hospital in time to sit for two nights and two days at his brother's deathbed.

Mrs. Moore bore her bereavement with a fortitude and patience which surprised her son. She had a beautiful letter from Miss Edgeworth.

'Can you bear sympathy my dear lady. May I venture to write to you. If it pains you too much to read this just throw it into the fire. Only let the

certainty go into your heart that you have the sincere deep sympathy of hearts who know how to feel for you. And whenever you can turn to them or to any of them for unburdening your mind, for soothing it, for any way softening your hard fate, you will. We have heard all the circumstances you would wish that we should know and shall not fail you may be certain to make these truly known wherever any misstatement or misapprehension may occur. But we have never seen any statement right or wrong in the public papers or heard any except from a coach agent who happened to pass near Moore Hall and saw of your carriages or people returning from Liverpool. We were dreadfully shocked by casually hearing the intelligence in this way . . .'

The loss of 'the dear companion of all his successes and reverses' fell heavily upon George. But he would make no resolution which he could not carry out. He went on racing, instead of turning, as Miss Edgeworth had hoped he would, to literature as a resource against sorrow. This year he won £470 on the St. Leger,which 'stopped up some holes'. In September, during some perfect days of weather, he was at Moore Hall, alone — for his mother had gone to Dublin for a change. Old memories assailed him, and the beauty of the lake pierced his heart.

CHAPTER X

LAND QUESTION

Horses, politics, religion have been the main preoccupations of modern Ireland; now it was the turn of politics to come into the life of the third George Moore, a man who had always shown himself very sensitive to his environment.

At the time of the agitation for Catholic Emancipation, the success of which, in 1829, opened parliament and political posts to the Catholics, Moore had still been too young to think of taking a part in politics. But there were plenty of agitations still to come. Irish Catholics, even after the Emancipation Act, could still feel that they suffered grievances, among others the mere fact of the existence of an Established Church, which drew a part of its revenues from tithes on the land. The material grievance was not very great, as far as the small holder and potato grower were concerned. The peasantry did not pay more than about a thirtieth of the produce of the soil on this account; but they looked upon the attack on tithes as a sort of holy war, in which belief, not unnaturally, they were frequently encouraged by their priestly guides. The outbreak, so far as homicides were concerned, was the worst suffered by Ireland in the nineteenth

century, and it must have put an end to many hopes of co-operation between classes and religions, such as had hitherto been entertained by the best of the Anglo-Irish gentry. Many foresaw that the rents of landlords would soon be attacked by the same machinery.

But the Whigs came into office, and in return for their favours O'Connell threw all his weight on the side of peace. He undertook neither to press for the disestablishment of the Episcopalian Church nor to urge a repeal of the Union, and promised to co-operate with authority in maintaining order. The Melbourne Ministry had offered to see fair play as between Catholics and Protestants, and to force the Orangemen to desist from provocations, and the agreement was kept in the spirit and the letter by that remarkable man, Thomas Drummond, Irish Chief-Secretary from 1835 to 1840.

Conservatively-minded Catholics of the upper and middle classes, such as the Moores who, but for John's plunge into the rebellion of 1798, had hitherto shown themselves entirely loyal to the British connection, usually labelled themselves as Whig. Tory they could not be, owing to the Tory party's alliance with the Orange faction. Their political views were in fact very similar to those of liberal-minded or indifferentist Protestants, who believed that one religion was as good as another, and wished that the Irish Roman Catholic clergy should be provided for by the State, and the full education of their flock confided to them.

Maria Edgeworth was a Protestant of this type, and she greatly approved of the work of Drummond (whose friend she was) in Ireland. Her references to Irish affairs in her correspondence with the Moores show that she felt that there was substantial agreement between her and them.

Even under the benign administration of Thomas Drummond the wild Milesian blood of the peasantry still manifested itself in spasmodic deeds of violence, the authors of which were seldom discovered. These crimes arose less from cupidity than from real or supposed deadly injuries chiefly connected with the possession of land, as when a farm was popularly regarded as ill-gotten by its occupier, or with spying and informing. In this way the landlords were hampered in the exercise of what was considered their rights of property; but in their own persons at least they considered themselves safe. A shiver therefore went through all the upper ranks of Irish society, and was even communicated to the young Queen, when at the end of 1839, a big proprietor in the midlands was murdered on his own property in broad daylight. The wildest rumours were current as to the significance of the event: Mrs. Moore begged news of the crime from Miss Edgeworth, who lived nearer to the scene.

'The horrible murder of that poor inoffensive not wise but good natured Lord Norbury', came the reply,

'has been followed by evils aggravating the crime if possible making the consequences every hour worse and worse for the country . . . A gentleman friend was present at the dinner at Charleville Court (the last dinner Lord Norbury ever eat) when he used the expression which Lord Charleville quotes as the last words he heard from him, viz., "I shall never be happy living in a fine house by myself till I see all my tenants living in comfortable houses". This was not a sentimental speech got up to do honour to his memory and make the tragic end so soon following more striking but simply and verbatim what he said. The gentleman I allude to was in the carriage with Lord Charleville when he drove an hour after they heard of the murder through Tullamore to make enquiries and in hope of seeing Lord Norbury before he should expire.

'There was a crowd assembled in the Town — at which my friend was not surprised for he knew that the news must now have spread even by the surgeon assistants who had hurried to the wounded lord and who had returned to Tullamore — therefore no deduction ought to be drawn by my witness from his seeing the crowd that they had any *premature* knowledge of the assassination. The crowd was such however that he saw the carriage could not pass and he called to the people to make way. They fell back to let the carriage pass, calling out *He's dead, He's dead.* From the tone my informant could not decide at first whether it was

rejoicing or deploring. It appeared to him to be simply announcing the fact — to give Lord Charleville himself notice that they need not go on in the hope of seeing Lord Norbury alive. (N.B. All the time Lord Norbury was alive and lived for a whole day afterwards.)

'The carriage passed through the crowd and then was followed by groans from the assembled people and these groans were followed by hisses long and loud which could be interpreted only one way by those in the carriage to whom they were addressed.

'Another fact I should mention on the authority of my eye witness — the tracks of the shoes of the assassin. Both were the shoes of a person of the lower class with nails marked. The shoes were not a pair — but certainly one was not a gentleman's shoe but of the same size as the other and clouted like a brogue.

'Every possible enquiry has been made to discover the murderer. And by my own informant I know that many ingenious and well followed up suggestions were made. The present Lord Norbury has offered, as you have by this time seen in newspapers a hundred a year to whoever discovered the assassin. The horrible suspicion alluded to cannot I think be seemingly credited by any human being. It would be absurd and motiveless as well as horribly unnatural.

'The present Lord Norbury gains only the title by his father's death and an adequate income of £2000 a year.

'I hope to Heaven in spite of Party spite on either side or on both it may be proved to the satisfaction of all well-wishers for their country, and well-believers in human nature that this murder has not been the consequence of any combination of the people but the result of individual or private vengeance or hatred.

'One other fact I ought to mention. Immediately after Lord Norbury had been shot when his son-in-law Mr. Steward reached him his Lordship walked to the house leaning on Mr. Steward's arm and as they walked Mr. Steward asked him if he had seen the person who had fired. He answered, "No, I was looking up a tree. I was giving orders about it to the steward. I did not see the person who fired — nor whence the shot came". "Have you any suspicion of anyone." The only persons he could think of who would have any malice against him, Lord Norbury said, were a man and his family whom he had ejected two years before this time.

'The man (I think) had been a servant and had been turned away. I have been also informed but this I cannot absolutely vouch — that Lord Norbury went with his agent or steward to demand possession from this man and stood by pistol in hand while the people were turned out and the house seized. This seems in direct contradiction to his Lordship's inoffensive character, but yet it may be true . . .'

To punish them for not coming forward with information the Norbury tenants were denied the privilege of carrying the Lord's coffin to the cemetery, a curious exemplification of the survival of feudalism in Ireland, in spite of class wars. One man sought the reward offered for the discovery of the murderer, a soldier, who perjured himself and was sentenced to transportation.

Upon the defeat of Melbourne and the return to power of the Tories under Peel, O'Connell resumed his liberty of action and founded an Association for the Repeal of the Union; it was at this time that George Henry Moore first conceived the idea of entering into public life. Though always more Irish in feeling than his father had been, he would not have gone forward as a Repealer, or Nationalist, but as a Reformer.

The country was indeed in sad need of disinterested advice and assistance; failures of the potato crop were now frequent. The ever increasing demand from the growing towns of Great Britain for agricultural produce and the early marriages of the peasantry had almost doubled the population in the fifty years since Foster's Corn Law Act. It was this pressure of population, and not, as the legend has it, a Cromwellian dispossession of the old native owners, which accounted for the swarm of miserable and half-naked people among the cabins on the edges of the boglands in western parts of Ireland. In their case utter disaster was always imminent, since they lived on the verge of starvation.

'I have the honour', the parish priest of Partry wrote to George Henry in July 1842, 'to acknowledge the receipt of your cheque for five pounds for the poorest tenants of Ballybonane and shall with the greatest of pleasure comply with your good intentions. Alas! it is at last proved that they are in distress. They are unable to work. They are weak and panting at my door and their pale and emaciated countenances would terrify you. Their little gardens are almost dug up. I will endeavour to do my duty. You and your kind and charitable mother have done yours; may Almighty God in his mercy pour his choicest blessings on you. You have saved from starvation and untimely death many in this neighbourhood.'

At about this time Mrs. Moore had herself inherited from her mother a life-interest in a small property in Roscommon where the rents were much in arrears. A letter to her from a relative, who looked after this property, gives an idea of the kind of problem which confronted the owners of rural slums in the West.

'The consideration then arises as to what is to be done with them. Now generally speaking they are all in a state of abject poverty and if we adopt proceedings to turn them out, much loss and injury to you will arise. A very fatal system has lately been adopted in Ireland of paying large sums to Tenants to induce them to surrender quietly. This may be good policy when the estate is your own but when you have only a life

interest, it would be absurd. These people are most unpleasantly situated, many of them have proposals accepted by your mother containing covenants for a lease, and you know already the difficulties on this point. We cannot eject on such an article without stamping it and if we treat them as tenants-at-will they will defeat us by the production of the article promising a lease.

'Shall I then go on in the old way, taking what I can get in the scramble, or shall I at once propose to get rid of them (if it can be effected) . . .

'It has struck me that you might adopt this plan, of giving every man a lease and forgoing the arrears on their promising to pay their rent with Regularity. If they then get in arrears, we can eject them at once without trouble. I fear however many of them are not worth the trouble.'

1842 was a year of great losses for the big cattle owners and the graziers. They were selling cows for what calves had fetched in the previous season. But the poorer classes were profiting from the plentifulness of produce and the low price of meat.

'Our lands', wrote Miss Edgeworth on December 2nd, 'are let low, scarcely any above 30 shillings per acre, except immediately near the town . . . We have had no difficulty in getting the rents paid, except that we were obliged in humanity to give weeks or months longer than usual.'

'Dear Mrs. Moore,' she wrote a few weeks later, 'I hope and trust that all pleas of necessity are now generally attended to by Irish landlords — and that the examination which the parliamentary commissioners are to make into the state of landlord and tenant in Ireland will bring out facts proving to public satisfaction perhaps *surprise* in England. I find many in London of great wit and means of information talking of Irish affairs with great fluency but *amazing* and *deplorable ignorance*. All luckily agree on one point and I hope you will agree with them and with me that the Catholic clergy should be paid by the state handsomely and respectably and not be as now forced to wring from the hands of poor parishioners their due in vile shillings and sixpences.'

The terrible effects of the failure of the potato crop began first to be felt in 1845, the year in which Augustus was killed in Liverpool. Touching potatoes, it was Miss Edgeworth's opinion, communicated in reply to urgent inquiries from Moore Hall, that very little could be done to avert tragedy. The crop was so bad and the people so helpless; moreover a supply of water was requisite which was seldom common near the cottages of the poor. Mrs. Moore had the notion of setting up a mill; but it was doubtful whether the cost of carrying grain from it would not be prohibitive and whether the people would avail themselves of the opportunity. In Kerry the gentry had

laid in large stores of oatmeal with which to pay the labourers at cost price during the coming summer when the pressure would most be felt; and this seemed to be a good plan, because if a round sum of money were laid out in oatmeal the capitalist would only lose the interest on his money for six months — every farthing would be repaid at cost price. The suggestion of a simple-minded scientist, Dr. Leibig, who recommended the use of sulphuric acid to the Irish peasantry as a means of saving their potatoes, had roused Mrs. Moore's interest, but it seemed to Miss Edgeworth somewhat fanciful to hope for 'dealings with sulphuric acid, chemists not attending, in remote cottages'.

What is interesting in this correspondence is the revelation of the attitude of the best and most serious minded Irish landlords during the tragedy of the famine. Anything seemed to them better than mere giving. They had a genuine fear of creating dependance and expectations which it would in future be impossible to realize. This was also the attitude of the British Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, who, at the hands of the melodramatists, has since suffered obloquy and been denounced as the creature of greedy capitalists, because he adhered during the crisis to the ideas of political economy, as revealed up to that time by the best minds in that science.

As for Daniel O'Connell, the great Tribune, the calamity took him unawares. He had never been

greatly interested in economic questions, although he used the tenants' distresses as a weapon for winning elections. 'He spoke out', says Sir William Gregory, a liberal Protestant landlord of Co. Galway, 'when widespread destitution prevailed, but he never brought his powerful intellect to formulate measures for the improvement of the condition of the Irish occupiers. His own property was a model of everything that ought not to be. In fact Irishmen in those days lived in a happy-go-lucky state; not a word was said or thought of a landlord who evicted non-paying tenants. It was the eviction of the solvent men which caused outrages. American sympathizers and American newspapers had not yet come over to stir up the peasants by the recital of their wrongs, and I am certain that the Devon Commission exercised the English conscience far more than the Irish, even the Irish liberal one . . .'[1]

In its later developments the land trouble in Ireland took on a racial and religious aspect, and the Land League characterized itself as an attempt to undo a conquest carried out by adventurers of alien race and religion. But (though fewer) there were always Catholic landlords in Ireland as well as Protestants, and in the West, most owners, whether Catholics or Protestants, were of mixed race, with an Irish as well as a Norman and old English strain in their blood; nor is it recorded that Catholic owners paid greater

[1] *Sir William Gregory, An Autobiography.* John Murray, 1894.

attention than Protestants to the maxim that 'property has its duties as well as its rights'. In fact they probably paid less, for, although Irish Catholics have a strong sense of justice, they are lacking in moral earnestness, which is a Protestant virtue, as the writer quoted in the foregoing passage indicates.

The impulse to reform had really come in the first instance from Protestant and Anglo-Irish sources. Prior and Molyneux, founders of the Royal Dublin Society, Bishop Berkeley, and later Richard Edgeworth, Maria's father, had given notable expression to it. Their admonitions had not gone unheeded, and in the later eighteenth century the effort of many of the Anglo-Irish gentry to reclaim the land from its distress and poverty had been crowned with success. The second George Moore, the historian, who cultivated English and Protestant virtues, had lent a willing ear to the gospel of 'improvements' and, as will be remembered, had deeply desired that his son should become a model landlord. This wish was never fulfilled, for the third George Moore, after he took up the popular cause, was too impatient of detail and routine to be able to fulfil any such role. In moments of excitement and emotion, as in the famine times, he showed an extraordinary generosity and spent himself in the service of his tenants. But normally it may be said of him — as indeed it may be said of men in general — that he was readier to die for his neighbour than to work for him.

CHAPTER XI

MOORE HALL DURING THE FAMINE

In 1846-47, when George Moore decided in earnest to enter Parliament, Daniel O'Connell was still living, and *The Times* was still writing that Irish priests were men of blasted character and totally incapable of the truth, who grossly exaggerated the horror of these years.

Although the latter view was widely held, private charity flowed generously into Ireland. Carlyle, the new prophet, was waking Englishmen up to a sense of their responsibilities. This passage had appeared in his pamphlet on Chartism:

> Ireland has near seven millions of working people, the third unit of whom, it appears according to Statistic Service, has not for thirty weeks each year as many third rate potatoes as will suffice him. It is a fact perhaps the most eloquent that was ever written down in any language at any date in the world's history. Were changes and reformation needed in Ireland? Has Ireland been guided and governed in a wise and loving manner?

The State was not inactive. It provided Indian corn to feed the hungry peasantry, and made grants of public works to assist the unemployed. The Poor

Law had already been extended to Ireland, and Peel hurried the Repeal of the Corn Laws through Parliament on the ground that the Irish must be fed. But none in Ireland, except a few Protestant clergymen from their pulpits, and a few philosophers like Maria Edgeworth, expressed any gratitude for their efforts. They proved indeed most inadequate; the public grant was maladministered, and had to be converted into a loan to be repaid by each district. Nationalists and Democrats were enraged, because Peel supplemented his measures of relief by passing a new Coercion Act. They called for an embargo on all foodstuffs from Ireland, and by a natural flight of fancy described the exports from Ireland as rent extracted by landlords from a starving people. In the bad parts of Ireland the landlords were not only getting little rent, but were paying 20s. in the pound poor rates. There was some substance in the complaint that the Corn Law Repeal Act, while purporting to be a palliative of Irish distress, would chiefly benefit English industrialists, and, by depriving Irish agriculture of a protected market, be of hurt to Ireland's permanent interests; it led in effect to a rapid decline in the population and, by reducing the demand for agricultural land, further impoverished proprietors. In the crisis of the Famine the agricultural population in Ireland fell by 1,000,000; but the process continued after the Famine, and by 1881, 2,000,000 more people had gone from Ireland.

George Moore's opportunity to contest a seat in Mayo, where only he would have had chances of success, came early in 1846, when Mark Blake, a country gentleman of Ballinafad, resigned from Parliament. Moore called himself neither Whig nor Tory, but he had the support, which still counted for much in Mayo, of all the great landlords, Sligo, Oranmore, Lucan, Dillon, who promised to march their tenants under guard to the court house to vote for him.

'The Louisburgh men all came in here to-day,' wrote Lord Sligo to Moore from Westport, 'but one who has fever. They will be escorted to Castlebar to-morrow. In God's name take better care of them than you did of Dillon's to-day. The Kilmana boys are safe . . . Joe's mob captured seven this morning, whom they forced to accompany them to Castlebar; four of them escaped . . .'

'I saw Conciliation Hall', Carlyle had lately written, 'and the last glimpse of O'Connell, chief quack of the modern world; first time I ever heard the lying scoundrel speak — a most melancholy scene to me altogether.' Poor O'Connell, who was now failing, put up Joe MacDonnell, the twenty tumbler man, as Repeal Candidate for Mayo, and Moore found in him a redoubtable enough opponent; he was backed up by all the priests. Lord Dillon locked up some of Joe's voters, and he retaliated by blocking the roads against the Dillon tenantry. At the Ballyglass races Moore

was attacked by an O'Connellite mob. Lord George Brown, afterwards Lord Oranmore, said that he would not go to the Poll without an escort. 'We owe our lives to the priests,' he wrote to Moore, 'they can excite the whole people against us. Whatever may be the cause, Ireland wants reconquering.'

Votes were lost to Moore, because he felt indisposed to criticize Peel's Coercion Act. As regards Repeal of the Union, he said that he did not think the moment opportune for so great a constitutional change. It would come some time, he thought, and this was also his mother's view, who remarked perspicaciously that 'England is unlikely to be always satisfied to hold Ireland at such expense'.

Moore accepted his defeat at the hands of MacDonnell with a good humour which Maria Edgeworth admired.

'My dear Mrs. Moore,' she wrote, 'Mrs. Edgeworth and Mr. Butler and my sister Butler and Francis read with such interest every paper which gave accounts of your son's proceedings, I congratulate you upon his very handsome, conciliating and truly patriotic and Christian like speech and conduct — seeking to make peace upon earth and good will. You may well say that you had rather have a son so nobly unsuccessful than anyone triumphing by party spirit and factious arts! and well right were you, as his mother [to] support his spirit. It is much in truth in real truth, that a

good mother can do, to excite and sustain virtuous noble spirit in the mind of a son, as we see recorded in the history of so many superior men in modern as well as in ancient times.

'You never can feel that you have lived long enough while you have still the best and noblest of all sorts of power.

'We feel *for* you and *with* you. We rejoice that you see in the poor people as well as in the gentlemen in your country the attachment to your son and the signs of approbation of his conduct which he deserves. A good sign of the Times for Ireland, and in time of need.'

It is certainly strange that where 'a whole people was without food, dying by the wayside' — the general description of Connaught in 1846-48 — an election could have been fought with such vigour.

'Dear and Esteemed Sir,' the parish priest of Partry wrote to Moore on the Feast of the Nativity, 'I am after being at Moore Hall this day and yesterday, in the hope of meeting you, that I might represent the wretched condition of the people in this half parish. You will be surprised to learn that there was not one man put to work in this half parish since you left home. You recollect the declaration made by you to Captain Farren "that some would starve in this district unless they found employment". I regret it is but too true — as one poor widow whose name I returned to you for

employment is now no more and I hope gone to a better world. Her name was widow Devrig, I attended her remains to the grave on the 21st and the same day I discharged the *same* duty towards two other poor *parishioners*, and the day previous I conducted to their last resting place the bodies of two others and yesterday I had the same duty to perform. I had a letter from Sir Robert Blosse and Mr Gildea saying that they would attend for the future your meetings and co-operate in getting ample employment for the people. I wish *most cordially* you were at home . . . There can be no difficulty about reproductive works for this Parish as it is an electoral division itself and the Landed Proprietors all agreeing — the 100 men from Port Royal and Keelbridge were prevented from working yesterday as their money is exhausted. The men from Clonee and Kelewala are working 15 days and not paid. I am told on all the lines there is confusion and corruption. Yours affectionately T. F. Conway.'

A wonderful racing success came Moore's way in May, when his horse Corunna, run in conjunction with Lord Waterford, won the Chester Cup. The race brought him £10,000, all good money, upon which he commented characteristically, first, that this would be a means of being very useful to the poor, secondly, that he ought with decent luck to have done it once or twice before, as he would certainly do it once or twice again. He at once lodged £1000 to his mother's

account at Westport, directing her to use £500 according to her judgment, with the sole limitation that every one of his tenants, or squatters, should receive immediate relief, and that all work required in return should be for the improvement of their holdings; the other £500 should be given in mere charity to the poorest people about Moore Hall, whether in the form of a cow, or some article of necessary comfort. 'The horses', he told his mother, 'would gallop all the faster with the blessings of the poor.'

The rest of his winnings on the Chester Cup, one fancies, had to be used to extricate himself from debt; for July found him more anxious about his affairs than ever he had been in his life. A letter which reached him in London from Mullowney threw him into despair. Everything was being eaten up at home in the running of Moore Hall.

'Sir,' his steward said, 'I answered your last letter but find you did not get it. I could not, nor did lodge any money in the bank since last February. Bills, of servants sending off horses and all expenses comes to great amount and you will find by the account I shall send you in a few days, oats and straw and housekeeping what it comes to cutting and saving turf, every other demands you will be able to judge. Mr. Bodkin called and seen Magee all he wants is to see him jump. Meehan is not at Moore Hall. Mr. Bodkin liked the horse well, the November rents is paid by me to very

little. Sir a stile has been built in the mearing wall between Stone park and Drimashone the consequence is that your demesne is made a commons of by all the Moore Hall people who have taken conacre from Sir Robert Blosse in Castle Carra carrying their potatoes same way. Jas Malloy who trew up some of his land in Derinrush took conacres on Sir Robert. I am told you ordered the stile. I think it right to tell you at once the great injury this stile is doing. I hope you will let me know by return of post as your place is going to ruin with it, a passage once granted is very hard to be stopped and you will have all the roughest mob on your land at all. Your very humble servant Wm. Mullowney.'

It might be impossible to go on, he felt. He would certainly take the collection of Ballintubber rents out of Mullowney's hands, perhaps discontinue him as steward, perhaps close down Moore Hall altogether. No news, public or private, reached him but it confirmed his worst fears. Government was hopeless, and English opinion utterly misinformed about Ireland. Even the disposal of his own charity had gone awry. Three-quarters of his fund had been expended, but how? Appeals continued to pour in. His mother spoke of troubles with the Rev. Father Conway and other priests; no security had been taken before giving the required relief. His mother might have been wiser to have taken the advice of the priests, seeing that, by

ignoring 'a power we cannot combat', she had caused them to prompt the people to refuse to work except at double prices.

'My dearest mother,' he wrote a little later from South Audley Street, 'I have to acknowledge the receipt of your very clear and explicit statement of matters connected with the fund I entrusted to you. Everyone proceeding of yours I think admirable, and do not find fault with you for consulting the priests — though their conduct would *almost* incline one to adopt Martin Kirwan's opinion, in which however I do not agree — knowing and seeing how tenacious you are about every particle and title of every act of yours — a tenacity absolutely puerile. I shall say nothing more about the subject. As for Mr. Ward and Mr. Conway, their conduct is quite inexcusable, and I beg that no cow or cattle of any sort shall be given to anyone in Ballyghanan until I return, in consequence of their interference in the carrying out of my intentions.'

Moore's great friend among his neighbours at this time was his kinsman, the new Lord Sligo,[1] whose home town, Westport, once so admired as a seat of progress, had now (according to Carlyle, who visited it in 1849) 30,000 paupers out of a population of 60,000. They shared together the expenses of procuring a huge cargo of meal from America for distribution in the famine stricken districts of Mayo. The pair then spent

[1] The third Marquess, who had succeeded his father in 1845.

the winter in touring through 27 counties of Ireland. They conferred with leading men as to what could be done to save a stricken people. Both were present at a meeting held in Dublin, in January 1847, and attended by 20 peers, 30 Irish M.P.s, even a few Orangemen, and by Daniel O'Connell himself. This Conference virtually declared for Irish self-government, and for the first time since the Union a prospect opened out of a united demand for the restoration of independence under the Crown, Grattan's Kingdom of Ireland.

CHAPTER XII

GEORGE MOORE THE THIRD ENTERS PARLIAMENT

Lord John Russell, by his dependence on the advice of the Manchester School economists during the Famine, had made the Whigs extremely unpopular in Ireland. A new party, strongly national, under the name of Young Ireland, began to prosper around a revolutionary doctrine, half Carlylese, as expounded by a writer of genius, John Mitchel, who succeeded in discrediting and in breaking 'the great beggarman', Daniel O'Connell. In some degree, perhaps, Moore was affected by the new gospel, and when, in 1847, he stood for Mayo again, he laid great stress upon the necessity of independence on the part of Irish representatives, who should not beg anything for themselves or others from Government. Although he still repeated that Repeal was — for the time, at least — inexpedient, Moore's criticism of British policy in the Famine, took up the form of invective. His success was a foregone conclusion.

The contest, in Mayo at least, was run much upon the old lines. Joe MacDonnell reappeared as an O'Connellite and the two other candidates in the field were members of the family of Brown. Moore retained Lord

Sligo on his side and was proposed by Colonel Gore, a Tory and a strong supporter of the landlords' cause; but he gained on this occasion much popular support. Foreshadowing what was afterwards called the policy of independent Irish opposition in Parliament he denounced the recent cowardly behaviour of the Irish representatives. The Protectionist leader, Lord George Bentinck had called together the Irish M.P.s. and outlined to them a scheme of State work in the building of railways on a large scale. The M.P.s. had approved of the scheme which excited universal preference in Ireland; whereupon the Prime Minister then summoned them to his room and ordered them under threat of resignation, to accept an alternative scheme, a loan of a few millions, to be expended (Moore said) in the most demoralizing manner, and to be repaid at heavy interest. The members, who hoped for positions under Government, obeyed Lord John Russell.

Miss Edgeworth thought that too little had been said at the elections of the munificent contributions of private charity from England, and too much despair expressed. Much that had happened in this way should have counteracted the mischievous spirit of national hatred which O'Connell — peace to his unprincipled soul! — had raised up. Divine Providence could draw good out of evil. A conciliatory spirit had been evoked between Catholics and Protestants, much of which was due to the Quakers, and the benevo-

lence shown by Americans should help to cement friendship between the United Kingdom and the United States. She had herself been bribed to speak, or at least think well, of many Americans by the most liberal gifts she had received from them for distribution among the very poor at Edgeworthstown: three hundred pounds worth of provisions, meal, rice, clothing etc.

'My dear Mrs. Moore', she wrote in July, 'your son is certain of success this time. I do not quite agree with Mr. Moore in his anger against the English Government for their conduct towards Ireland during the late distresses. I am no politician nor have I information sufficient to discuss the subject with people of knowledge of the facts but merely from what we have read in the papers and read of their speeches on both sides and during the course of both Peel's and Sir J. Russell's administration it appears that whatever mistakes they may have committed and plenty de part et d'autre they have committed (wasting money and provisions etc.) still and nevertheless I think they have meant well for Ireland and that there is no design to oppress or ruin this country. Except it be ruin to get rid of the Irish landlords, Protestant landlords especially, about whom the English have been wonderfully misinformed. Their eyes and ears must have been and will be opened on this point. The conduct of Irish proprietors during these distresses must convince

the English as it has convinced the Irish of their good will by their good deeds. I am happy to think also that goodwill has been increased between our Churches by the conviction which you have expressed that independently of all desire or attempt to convert or to seduce from what the Cs. believe to be their duty and hold as their faith, the P. clergy have been sincerely zealous in relieving their distresses without attempting to make the soul pay for the body. I see this good effect in the people about this — many of your clergy have candidly expressed it.

'I am persuaded that the union between the two countries will be more strongly cemented now than it has ever yet been. The edges have been washed clean and the asperities cleared away and simply by the cohesion and happy contiquity they will fit and stick together.

'You will rejoice at least for poor Mrs. E's sake that we have had this seasonable relief. For really she has worked so hard that I wonder that she is not quite worn out as many have literally been by their exertions. She is however quite well — except for her eyes which have failed sadly. I have, I may say recovered from repeated attacks of erysepilas, but I cannot expect at my age ever again to be as strong as a horse. I am as strong and have as few infirmities as at past eighty can possibly be expected, and I am grateful to my God and happy with my fellow creatures.

'Especially with those fellow creatures my sisters

Fanny and Hanora who are come to Ireland in spite of Famine and Pestilence actually come to spend a summer and autumn with us — will stay till October.

'I am peremptorily ordered to stop. Therefore I am my dear Mrs. Moore, Sincerely yours affectionately, Maria Edgeworth.'

In her estimate of the sort of relations likely to develop between Ireland and America, as a consequence of the emigration of the Famine victims, Maria Edgeworth was sadly at fault! But she did well to protest against the legend sedulously propagated and (as she said) well received in England, that during the Famine Irish proprietors had behaved like Torquemadas. In the province of Connaught, alone, three landlords, Thomas Martin of Ballynahinch, Lord Dunsandle and Sir Robert Gregory, had perished as a result of fever contracted from their efforts to relieve the sick. There were some bad landlords; the majority, if they did not rise above human nature, certainly did not sink below it; a few played the part of heroes. But there was hardly a single interest, in the rising parliamentary democracy of the United Kingdom, which did not profit by maligning the class. The truth is great, but does not always prevail.

It was a great handicap to Moore that he should have entered into Parliament at a moment when all

spirit had gone out of the constitutional movement. O'Connell's death, together with the sentiments of indignation evoked by the Famine, helped the extreme wing of the Young Ireland party to gain an ascendancy for the time being, and withdrew public attention from Westminster. The Young Irelanders preached a resort to arms, and found encouragement in the fall of the French Monarchy and in the English Chartist Movement. The rebellion, however, was a lamentable failure. In May 1848, John Mitchel was convicted of conspiracy and sentenced under the Treason Felony Act to 14 years' transportation. Smith O'Brien and John Dillon evaded arrest, and went to Munster where, at Ballingarry, O'Brien led an encounter of some half-starved peasants against a garrison of Police. He was convicted with others, and sentenced to death; but it soon became evident that the Government did not intend to execute anyone, and a further judgment of the Court was postponed until the Hilary term.

'The Government', Miss Edgeworth wrote to Mrs. Moore, 'not having decided at once either to execute or to pardon takes from pardon its grace and from punishment its use. They have given encouragement, time and opportunity to rebels and knaves and fools to spout themselves into martyrs and heroes and honest men, which last I do believe O'Brien is though a fool — as he always was . . . If these people had fools caps on their heads and were made ridiculous they

would have no followers . . .[1] Sincerely Yours affectionately, Marie Edgeworth.'

In Parliament Moore had given his support to the precautionary measures taken by Lord Clarendon before the outbreak. Moved also by some horrible outrages in Tipperary he voted for a new Coercion Bill, whilst saying (in his first speech) that if the Government were responsible for the protection of life in disturbed districts, it was also responsible that the patient and obedient should not die of famine. 'If my vote was a bad one', he wrote to Dr. MacHale, 'of course I am answerable for my error; but if that question be regarded as a means of insisting on measures of relief, no stand upon that Bill could avail for such a purpose. The Ministerial majority upon that Bill was too overwhelming . . .'

His appearance in the House of Commons attracted a good deal of attention. He was a fine figure of a man, with, as was afterwards remarked, many of the characteristics and to some degree the looks of the great Lord Palmerston, and though he said what he thought about the errors of English policy, he found some friends, chiefly in the Protectionist and country gentleman's party, then led by Lord George Bentinck, a sportsman like himself with a mis-spent youth behind him. His high spirits were admired in this quarter, as when he sent a challenge by Sir Robert Blosse, a Mayo

[1] O'Brien was finally transported. He was allowed to return to Ireland about ten years later.

neighbour, to a Mr. Higgins, a writer in *The Times*, who had accused him of speculating on English race-courses instead of attending to his duties during the Famine. Moore had no difficulty in bringing forward unimpeachable evidence, such as Lord Sligo's (who said that the attitude of *The Times* was enough to turn all landlords into Repealers), of his sacrifices in time, money and trouble for the poor. Higgins however refused to fight with the man whom *The Times* had called (rather wittily, it must be confessed) 'Wolf Dog Moore, the Tender-Hearted Turfman'.

Moore's horse, 'Wolf Dog', had been one of the star turns on the English Turf in 1847, and there was never a grander piece of riding than that of Frank Butler on this horse when he was beaten by Sir Wm. Gregory's Clermont at Epsom for the Metropolitan Stakes.

CHAPTER XIII

MAYO IN THE 'FIFTIES

Moore was approaching his fortieth year and still remained unmarried. Hope now revived again in his mother's breast. Why, with his opportunitites as a member of Parliament, should he not make a good match? He might gain the entry into the drawing-rooms of the great political hostesses, who did not entirely exclude Roman Catholics from their receptions. Miss Edgeworth doubted if she could help; but she forwarded a note of introduction to Lady Beresford. 'But I do not think', she added, 'that her society or any of those I am acquainted with, viz. the Lansdowne House, or Cleveland House, or Lord Gresham, nor Lady Wellesley or Lady Cornwallis would in the least forward your views for his marriage.'

She was unacquainted with 'high Catholic people', such as the Stricklands, Shrewsburys and Staffords. But perhaps Mr. Bodenham, who was hail-fellow-well met with all fine and foreign society, and hand in glove with Cardinals, would introduce George Henry into places where he would have a much better chance of meeting 'an accomplished and suitable lady'.

This was one of Maria Edgeworth's last communications with Moore Hall. She died in 1849 at the age of

eighty-two. 'Her death', her step-mother wrote to Mrs. Moore, 'was just what she had always hoped and wished it would be, easy as if falling asleep and while her mind and faculties retained all their powers. I shall not forget her gay conversation the morning she was taken ill, when it had pleased the Almighty to take back that life he had given and had so singularly favoured in this world.'

A poet has said truly that 'If Hopes are dupes, Fears may be liars'; and, at the end of all, George Henry's bride was neither the low adventuress of his mother's nightmares nor the daughter of a de la Rouchfoucauld, a Talbot, or a Colonna. She was a Miss Mary Blake, a daughter of neighbours, the Blakes of Ballinafad, good landlords with properties in Mayo and Galway, and well thought of. Miss Blake was a mild young woman with a pleasant face, not clever, but unquestionably a lady and unquestionably a Catholic. There was really nothing whatever to be said against her, or against her family, except that her brothers were race-goers, so that the marriage would not help to eliminate the horse-fever from the Moore blood.

It was an anti-climax; but the marriage which took place in 1851, proved a very happy one. The presence of the young woman at Moore Hall acted as a much-needed sedative. A great peace descended upon the lonely house over against the lake. As Moore's parliamentary duties took him so often to London, it was

suggested that Mrs. Louisa Moore should remain at Moore Hall as company for his wife. To this the young woman readily assented, saying that she had found in her mother-in-law the most witty and agreeable woman in the world. When the M.P. was away in London, they spent long evenings together talking of him. They got out his travel-diaries and his letters from the East, and wondered if the time would ever come when he would make a book out of them (it was at this time that he did away with the letters). They read Sir Walter Scott to each other, and the younger woman vied with the elder in her admiration. She could soon repeat by heart pages and pages of the Waverley Novels.

Soon after his marriage, being at Moore Hall during the Recess of Parliament, George Henry sought to interest himself and to please his young wife, by improving the demesne and introducing decorations into the mansion. He cleared a part of the demesne of the scrub which covered it, and with oak cut in the woods, and carved by local carpenters, he supervised the construction of an oak-panelled dining-room, setting up twin sculptured figures of a merman and mermaid to support an intricately carved mantelpiece; he also bought a great mahogany sideboard on which to place his trophies of the turf. On the walls pictures of his racehorses now competed for attention with the great gilt framed family portraits. The character of Moore

Hall had already somewhat altered since his ownership; these early Victorian interpolations had begun when, after some racing success, he had had the roof lifted, the old-fashioned little slates disappearing in favour of large modern ones, and the small-paned windows being replaced by large plate glass (the old glass being stored away in the cellar — where it was discovered years afterwards). The later changes were even less in keeping with the original, for, as soon as Moore had finished in the dining-room, he decorated the drawing-room according to a formula which was meant to express his adoration of the Greek classical civilization and his memories of the plasters and cornices sketched by him in the East. The walls were of plaster painted in blue-grey, and the floor French parquet; but otherwise the room became an exact copy of a Greek apartment. The work was regretted by Moore's sons when they grew older; but met with praise from visitors at the time, and on one occasion the parish priest, in a public eulogy of Moore, declared that the like of the two rooms, in their unsurpassed taste and symmetry, could not be seen in any other house in Ireland.

It pleased Mrs. Louisa Moore to know that her son should be thus occupied; but she was now confined to two rooms at the top of the house. The old lady — she was not so old, only sixty — met with an accident soon after her son's marriage, and thereafter she only left her apartments on fine days, when Mullowney pushed

her about the garden in a bath chair. Her eldest grandson, George Moore the fourth, born in 1852, never remembered her except as an invalid.

Moore went on with his politics, moving, as it would be put nowadays, more and more to the Left. Twenty-five Irish members soon looked up to him as a leader. Working with Lucas and Gavan Duffy, he really aimed at what Butt and Parnell accomplished much later: the formation of an Independent Irish party, which would vote on whatever side was likely to turn out a Government when it refused to adopt its ideas on policy. During the No-Popery panic he made himself very popular with the Catholic interest, both in England and in Ireland, by his fierce and eloquent opposition to Lord John Russell's Bill of 1851, which would have prohibited Catholic Bishops under pain of imprisonment from using the titles of their seat and confiscated to the State all property bequeathed to them under these titles. Gladstone, Bright, and Hume were among his allies on this question. When Wiseman, over whose appointment as first Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster arose all this pother, read Moore's speeches, did he perhaps wonder what had become of the brother of this fierce champion of his cause, the poor Augustus, with whom he had once travelled in Ireland?

Moore also interested himself in the Tenant Right movement, which created a vision of uniting the Northern Presbyterians with the Catholic farmers in

the south. The programme was modest enough, as the spokesmen of the occupiers of land merely demanded legislation which would assure a certain stability of tenure to the farmers. There was no Irish question of importance which could compare with this. In the old days by 'custom' there had been considerable stability. But under the Encumbered Estate Act which had been passed by Parliament, as relief for bankrupt landlords, much of the land of Ireland passed into the hands of mere investors, who expected so much on their borrowed capital and a large income besides. The Act was made much use of in the west, and Moore himself had parted under it with his embarrassed Ballintubber estate, though he repurchased later by taking out a mortgage from a Scottish Insurance Society. As an example of what happened under this unfortunate Act, the case of the Law Life Insurance Company has often been quoted. This company became one of the largest owners in the west of Ireland, and although there was no trouble about the rents, the Secretary one day dispatched a notice to quit to every tenant, together with a receipt for the last quarter's payment.

Moore however used language, very dangerous to his own class, in supporting a programme which was founded both in justice and common sense.

> About two hundred years ago the English drove the whole Catholic people of Ireland from every part of the country into Connaught, giving them

> the other alternative of hell, which, however, they did not choose to adopt Since that time possessors of the soil had scarcely reclaimed an acre of the wilderness to which the people of Ireland had been driven. They had scarcely built a farm house, they had scarcely constructed a farm-yard, they had scarcely made a fence, they had scarcely dug a drain. The old population driven by the English into that country, by the sweat of their brows, by the toil of their hands, had reclaimed a howling wilderness and made it a fertile land; and since that time, year after year, generation after generation, the landlords had grasped and confiscated the property which the tenant had created, thus generation after generation driving him further into the wilderness, again to reclaim, again to drain and again to live upon his labour.

Had he forgotten all that his father used to tell him about their kinsman the first Lord Sligo and his useful philanthropies? Had he forgotten his own early neglect of his father's wish that he should become an improving landlord?

When election time came again, in 1852, it was natural that the great landlords of Mayo, who had previously supported Moore, should have withdrawn from him their vote and influence in favour of the Tory. The Whig candidate, a man named Higgins, subsidized a Castlebar newspaper, which defamed Moore in an extraordinary article, calling him, 'the lucky descendant of a lucky clerk in a Spanish counting house'.

> Mr. George Henry Moore has again with a recklessness of which he alone is capable rushed into print, under the editorial patronage of the *Telegraph*. Mr. Moore having been arraigned, tried and found guilty before that stern judge public opinion, of uttering the most atrocious sentiments relative to Landlords, the gentlemen and the respectability of this country; of being a vile slanderer of female virtue; an accomplice of a miscreant monk in burning the word of God; the vilefier of the Protestant religion; the renegade from all the former professions.

A mad priest had lately burned a number of Bibles which were being distributed by Protestant missionaries among the people; but it is needless to say that Moore was innocent of encouraging the holocaust. Why he should have been charged with slandering female virtue, it is now, unfortunately, impossible to discover. More serious for his election prospects was a passage which pictured him as an evictor, an exterminating landlord, who now hoped to advance his political ambitions by expressing sympathies with the cause of the tenants. There had been evictions on the Ballintubber estate; but they took place while the property was in chancery (under the Encumbered Estates Act), and not therefore by Moore's order. Moore sought Lord Sligo's advice as to whether he should proceed for libel against the Castlebar paper; but the reply was not wholly sympathetic. It may have been the view of his fellow-landlords that Moore was claim-

ing far too much credit for his easy-going attitude in the matter of rent-collection. (Could one be, at the same time, a wise far-seeing landlord and a popular politician?) Would Moore's improvisations benefit anyone in the long run? and painful as were the clearances which had lately been effected on many non-economic slum properties,[1] it was generally agreed that subdivision was a part at least of the root of the land evil. But Moore had gaily gone on subdividing, and multiplying his tenants-at-will, and it was felt no doubt that a part of his motive was the desire to improve his political position by currying favour with the masses.

'My dear G,' Lord Sligo wrote to him, 'I send you a copy of my letter to Pole — I wrote it most cordially but think you unwise to show any care for their dirty work — Cavendish's libel to which I alluded had no foundation in fact, was pure lie — accused me of "unjust" demands for money — I told him and from my heart how little I cared. He again stated that for ten days the sheriff had been occupied ejecting when he had worked one day and really put one man out — so that fact was no more in my case than yours — and I doubt the wisdom of appearing to care — In my case I really do not care about a Mayo paper. I contradict anything in a London paper. As to the eviction I believe it took place under the Court of Chancery —

[1] The custom was to provide the ejected tenants with means to emigrate.

Why? Because of your neglect to attend to the rent paying of your tenants.

'Here is a contrast between my estate and Sir Samuel's and yours will be a Sir Samuel's case if you do not mind and however it may suit you to say, that you did not sanction it — you must on reflection feel that the cause you follow is tending to exterminate your tenantry. Sir Samuel Malleys property in Chancery — owed five or six years rent — It is in Kilmeera and the houses are being levelled till at least half are evicted and legally removed. In Clare Island it is in contemplation to evict every soul.

'In Ld Sligo's estate large evictions were carried out — but care was taken to select those who showed a desire to be honest — they were in all cases put back and though the really idle and dishonest are put off, the honest are freed from all and given at a new fairly valued rent.

'In consequence $\frac{3}{4}$ of Sir Samuel's tenants will be put out and perhaps a $\frac{1}{4}$ of Lord Sligo's — In each case the landlord is responsible — Sir Samuel has ejected at least three times as many (or will have done so) in proportion as Ld Sligo and the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ are evicted while Ld Sligo's increase in industry, comfort and energy — You will be a second Sir Samuel however you may avoid abuse in the *Telegraph* you are morally bona fide the exterminator and I think as to the 70 families you can only make a claptrap not a real defence . . .

'In my hearts belief you and Sir Samuel do more ruin and injure and persecute and exterminate your tenants than any man in Mayo.

'You will disagree in toto — time will show who saves most of his tenants and most of his rents . . .

'Blosse is in the house and I will show him your letter and mine — Mine is not meant to publish if you desire that I must alter it by another — though I send him that by this post. Yours affectionately Sligo.'

Moore and Higgins were elected, the defeated candidate being Lord Sligo's nominee, a Tory named McAlpine. Over the greater part of Ireland the Independent cause met with a decisive success. Moore's party for a time held the balance of power in the new House of Commons; but it was weakened by internal dissensions and the prospect of office as soon as the Liberals came in. Lord Aberdeen, it seems, offered Moore the Chief-Secretaryship; he refused, but two of his chief colleagues, Sadlier and Keogh, succumbed to temptation, the one becoming a Lord of the Treasury and the other Irish Solicitor-General. Their action met with the approval of the great Churchman Paul Cullen, whom Moore regarded as the most baleful influence of the time. The Cardinal, who had known the Rome of Mazzini and had an Italian sense of statecraft, distrusted Englishmen, Protestants and Irish patriots equally; later he was one of the ablest supporters of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, and was

even mentioned as a possible successor to Pope Pius IX. It is said that he regarded the Famine as a dispensation of Providence, intended to enable the Irish to spread the faith abroad. Moore found himself checked by Cullen in all his endeavours, as Newman also did when he came to Dublin in the 'fifties, as Rector of the new Catholic University, full of the dream of turning Dublin into a centre for the education of all English-speaking Catholics.

Thorough as was his dislike of Englishmen, Cullen taught obedience to constituted authority, and for a while the drift towards revolutionary politics was stemmed. The Whig Catholic place-hunters triumphed everywhere; it was vain to denounce ecclesiastical domination, and Moore found himself deserted and alone. In 1857 he had a hard fight for his seat in Mayo; a few priests came to his side, in spite of the Cardinal, and he won, but was then unseated on the plea that 'spiritual influence' had been employed on his behalf by the Rev. Peter Conway of Partyr and the Rev. Luke Ryan. It was admitted that he was not personally cognizant of the intimidation; but he was declared ineligible to be a candidate at the ensuing election. He replied to the rebuff by presenting himself as a candidate at a contest in Kilkenny. The two Tories were here successful; but Moore had the satisfaction of seeing Cardinal Cullen's Whig nominee placed at the bottom of the poll.

CHAPTER XIV

FENIANS AT MOORE HALL

WHILE out of Parliament Moore watched his two elder sons, George and Maurice, emerge from babyhood, and reopened his racing stables. Later came three more children: Augustus, Nina and Julian.

The eldest boy, Master George, was slow in emerging from babyhood. It is said that he was over two before he uttered recognizable sounds, and then only when he fell into a well. He was rescued, his cry, 'Da, Fa, Wa', having been interpreted to mean 'George Fallen into Water'.

It was almost by accident that Moore Hall was brought again on to the racing map. A mare, The Cook, so called because she had been expected to 'cook all the Birds at the Curragh' had been left over from the old days. She was used as a carriage horse, and was supposed to be barren; but Moore, thinking that it would be interesting to make sure, sent her late in the day to Mountain Deer, and there was a foal to which was given the name of Croaghpatrick, Mayo's sacred mountain. Aplely, an ex-jockey, who had replaced Mullowney as Moore's head servant, thought highly of the dark brown colt with white legs, long and low like a rat, and prophesied that he would restore the

family fortunes. Croaghpatrick, therefore, was put into training. He won his first race at Howth in 1860; one thing led to another, and Moore Hall soon became an establishment where horses were reared and trained. George and Maurice lisped in racing jargon. All life to them centred round the stables and round the course which had been laid out in the fields below Drimnashinagh.

George Henry never spoke of his mother or of his brother, but he would sometimes allude to his father, and say that were George in Spanish clothes he would look just like the historian as a boy. George in a pretty passage of his old-age book, *Conversations in Ebury Street*, has related how first he came by some knowledge of the family history.

> . . . I was taken into the library at Moore Hall to be shown a portrait of my grandfather painted in Spain when he was my age; we were compared feature by feature, grandfather and I, nose, eyes and mouth eliciting points of resemblance. Were George in his grandfather's clothes, my father said, none would suspect that he had not sat for the portrait; and despite my protests William Mullowney was told to return the little boy in green to his place above the library door. I watched him through gathering tears, for I had looked forward to wearing Spanish clothes! Where were they? and with my sorrow half forgotten I seized Betty MacDonald by the hand, crying: Come, Betty, and help me to find the clothes. Master George, the clothes are not

> in the house. Yes, they are, Betty; in the store-room or in the lumber room — my father and mother laughed at my impulsiveness, and I heard that my grandfather did not leave Spain till he was twenty — I do not think it was until I had outgrown the Spanish uniform or court dress that the desire to parade as my grandfather passed from me, and my interest was transferred from the little boy in green to the sad old gentleman over the chimney-piece — my grandfather at the age of sixty, the author of many books, written in his library, so Betty told me. . . .

The reputation of Moore as one of the finest gentleman riders of the day in flat races, and one of the boldest of steeplechasers, lived on in many memories from which his Parliamentary achievements quickly faded away. From the people about the place the boys learned all about Wolf Dog and about Coronna, and about the New Malton Stakes of 1842; but no one encouraged them to become little politicians. It was generally understood that Moore felt no regret upon withdrawing from public life — that he had only gone into Parliament from a sense of duty — that he was much prouder of owning a good horse than of making a good speech — and so forth. His heart indeed was not one that knew bitterness, and yet, as Sir Charles Gavan Duffy remarked of his protestations, a man must suffer from being deprived from the exercise of a great gift with which he is endowed. Therefore, it is not surprising that as soon as Moore saw another

opportunity of serving the country he should have seized it; in 1860-61, when England was suffering from an invasion scare, he drew up plans for organizing a volunteer movement in Ireland.

'My dear Mr. Moore,' wrote A. M. Sullivan, editor of the *Nation*, 'If England is excited and afire about the imminent war with America, as you may see by the startling news of yesterday, *Ireland* (judging from this city) is equally, nay a thousand times more so. The sensation is immense. I implore of you, if we are to do anything at all, to guide the country aright, *come up at once*, *instantly*. A. M. Sullivan.'

The contrast between the encouragement of volunteers in England and their prevention in Ireland was an obvious point enough. Moore thought that the Government would find it difficult to resist the right of Ireland to organize its young men for 'Home Defence' under a native 'Directory', especially as he did not propose that arms should be issued for the moment! Each volunteer was to declare his readiness to bear arms in defence of his country should defence render such armed defence 'necessary for the liberties of the Irish people'. John Mitchel and some other extremists, who were consulted, cast doubt on the honesty of the wording of Moore's manifesto, and wished to avow openly that the organization would be used to extort national concessions from England. But even allowing for English ignorance of Ireland it was

unlikely that the meanest intelligence in the British Cabinet would have been deceived, or have supposed, that a French or an American landing in Ireland really preyed on Moore's mind. A dispute arose as to whether Moore or T. D. Sullivan had begotten the idea and by the time the dispute was composed the invasion scare had passed.

His racing affairs did not yet compensate Moore for his further political disappointment, and in 1861 he was indebted to the extent of £5000 to some prominent members of the ring. When Croaghpatrick, in whom his brother-in-law, Joe Blake, and William Murphy, his wife's brother-in-law, appear to have had an interest, made his debut in England in the Lincolnshire Handicap, he failed to justify old Aplely's confidence; whereupon he was sent to be trained by William Day, who ran him in the City and Suburban, where he was beaten out of sight. Brought back to Ireland, he met with a number of reverses, although winning the second class at the Curragh April meeting. There is a legend that he was then walked from Mayo to Dublin and from Liverpool to Goodwood; but the truth is that he was now left for a while, along with the young heir to Moore Hall, at Hednesford with another trainer, Cliff, while George Henry and his wife went on to London to amuse themselves.

It was only when Cliff reported well of the horse that the owners decided to enter him at Goodwood. At first his form read very moderately; 40 to 1 against

him, when Moore, Blake and Murphy made their bets. Of a sudden, on the Monday, he was hoisted in the market, because the touts had seen him gallop; on the day of the race, in a field of 45, he was first favourite with Nativity. Moore, owing to his debts, did not show himself on the course, but witnessed the race from the top of the stand. The finish was one of the greatest that has ever been seen even at Goodwood; so wide apart were Man at Arms and Croaghpatrick that the judge, J. F. Clark, could hardly see who had won. It has always been supposed that Moore, Blake and Murphy realized £20,000 between them that day.

After the cheering was over, Moore remembered that he had left his son at Cliff's, so he hurried to Hednesford to find the nine-year old boy, whom he then deposited at his old school, Oscott. On the Friday of the same week he watched Croaghpatrick take the Chesterfield Cup and gain another large stake for his party. The horse had been listed on both occasions as Mr. Murphy's, and, a little later, questions being raised at the Jockey Club as to the genuineness of the description, Moore, Blake and Murphy were requested to attend before a committee. Blake objected to the names of the committee, but said that he would be willing to abide by the decision, whatever it might be, of Lords Derby, Zetland and Exeter, the point being that Moore, as he was in default of stakes, could not have run the horse under his own name. Evidence, it is said was produced which satisfied these

noblemen that Moore had sold Croaghpatrick to Murphy previous to Goodwood, and Lord Derby's verdict was that Croaghpatrick could not fairly be said to have been entered for the race by a false description. But in the myth which grew up around Croaghpatrick, Moore has always appeared as owner.

The next year Croaghpatrick ran, again as Mr. Murphy's, at Ascot; Moore was there and advised all his friends to back him. 'Where have you tried him?' Joseph Osborne asked. 'On the Rowley Hill at Newmarket,' was the reply. 'There is but little hill there,' said Osborne, 'and I am sure that a lazy animal like Croaghpatrick, won't go up the ascent with sufficient run to enable him to win.' The horse flattered Moore and a legion of backers for a long way in the race, but was nowhere at the finish.

This was the end of Croaghpatrick's English career; but he did wonders in Ireland at the Curragh, winning the King's Cup on three successive occasions, as Joe Blake's property. Moreover, Moore had now other winners in his stables: Master George, called after the owner's eldest son, and Slieve Carne, who walked over at the Shrewsbury steeplechase, and Maurice, who was entered for the Derby one year. Master George won the Leicestershire handicap and four other races in succession.

Once Master George met with a reverse, as is recorded in the following letter from the young gentleman, whose namesake he was.

'My dear Papa, I am very sorry that I delayed writing to you so long. I hope that you are well and that you will be here soon. I am very sorry that Master George lost. I remain your affectionate son George Moore.'

As though he did not already live at sufficient high pressure, Moore now entered into relations with the Fenian movement. The Irish Republican Brotherhood, founded in Dublin in 1858, counted on the emigrants of the Famine, many of whom had fought in the American Civil War, to return and fight for Ireland. Arms were imported into Ireland and the young were secretly drilled; even soldiers in Irish regiments were sworn in. All this was done in teeth of the violent hostility of the Roman Catholic Church, this time acting in complete accord under Cardinal Cullen. Newman's friend, Bishop Moriarty of Kerry, declared that hell would not be hot enough nor eternity long enough for a Fenian.

Years later, after he had served a long term of penal servitude, O'Donovan Rossa described a tour (no date was given, but it must have been in 1864 or 1865) which he had made through Ireland for the purpose of swearing in Fenians. A possible recruit whom he had been advised to see was George Henry Moore, then High Sheriff of Mayo. Rossa found Moore in the Court House at Ball and waited for him outside until he saw him come out and walk up the middle of the

broad street towards the hotel. He then sided up to him, and said in a half whisper, 'Mr. Moore, my name is O'Donovan Rossa; I have a few words of introduction to you from Thomas Neilson Underwood of Strabane' . . . 'How are you fixed here,' said Moore, 'where are you going next?' 'There is a brother-in-law with me; he will go home with me. We will start for Moore Hall in about an hour; let you start for Moore Hall about half an hour after I start, and I will see you there.'

Presently Rossa and his companion, Edward Duffy, reached Moore Hall, which Rossa describes 'as a hall, a mansion, a castle, the largest I saw in Ireland;[1] acres of green lawn in front, the end of the lawn being the brink of the silvery lake Lough Carra'. Moore showed them over the house and grounds, and in answer to some remark about the size of the house and stables, said that it took nearly the whole estate to keep them in repair.

Their chief conversation turned upon what Rossa called 'the organization', and Moore said that he had no objection to taking the oath, but felt that for others, the oath might be an obstacle, owing to the strong opposition by the Church to secret pledge-bound societies. Rossa therefore preferred not to administer the obligation; but suggested that Moore should call upon James Stephens, the Head Centre, when next he

[1] He cannot have seen many. The account appeared in the *Gaelic America*.

was in Dublin. Arrangements for a secret code were made, rather obvious, one thinks, as it was to consist of a message from Stephens informing Moore that 'the horses had reached Dublin and would be stabled there a few days before they were taken to the Curragh, and that if he desired to see them before they were taken to the Curragh, he could come to Dublin immediately'.

Whether Moore ever took the oath is uncertain. John Devoy says that the interview with Stephens took place; but that nothing happened, except that George Moore declined Stephens's request that he should go to America and make speeches on Ireland's behalf whilst the rising was in progress. Moore certainly remained in touch with the movement, because his second son, Maurice, recalls how the family were staying, one summer in the troubled time, at the seaside near Galway, when a carriage drove up to the door; the child's curiosity was excited by an air of mystery about the visitors, two exceptionally tall nuns, almost six foot high. These visitors were Fenians in disguise, his mother told him in after years, and she added that she did not approve of the danger and disrepute into which her husband was involved in having such associates. The early Fenians were, for the most part, men of honour, averse to agrarian knavery and to outrage; but they were regarded by Moore's social circle as outlaws and potential malefactors.

CHAPTER XV

THE LAST YEARS OF GEORGE MOORE THE THIRD

SINCE its foundation Oscott, where the fourth George Moore now was, had retained its character and organization. But there were many more boys there now than in George Henry's time, and a new site had been chosen on higher ground on which to erect larger buildings — the 'stately Gothic pile', which had first housed Newman after his flight from Anglicanism and Oxford.

The high red walls of the college faced bleak terraces: a square tower squatted in the middle of the building, and out of it rose the octagon of the bell-tower, and in the tower wall was the great oak door studded with nails. Within from three sides of a quadrangle latticed windows looked on greensward; on the fourth there was an open corridor with arches to imitate a cloister. All was strong and barren, and only about the varnished staircase was there any sign of comfort. There the ceiling was panelled in oak; and the banisters, the coco-nut matting, the bit of stained glass, and the religious prints, suggested a mock air of hieratic dignity. A long stone corridor, hung with modern pictures of saints, led to the chapel with its

blue and starred ceiling. The benches there were for the boys; the carved chairs set along both walls, between the communion racks and the first steps of the altar, were for the divines. The president and vice-president knelt, facing each other. The maid-servants worshipped in a corner, as far out of sight of the boys as possible.[1]

The President in 1861 was a certain Dr. Northcote (1821-1907), an Anglican, who had come under Newman's influence at Oxford. He had married; his wife became a Catholic; he gave up his Anglican orders; and after her death he had presented himself for the Roman Catholic priesthood. *The Catholic Encyclopaedia* says that under his presidency Oscott 'entered upon an unprecedented degree of prosperity and his influence on education was felt far outside the walls of Oscott'.

But the little boy from Mayo could not stomach the Oxford ex-Anglican, and he stored up a hatred of the school, which, years afterwards, he discharged in his books. Northcote despaired of him. When after a little time Maurice followed his elder brother to Oscott he did a little — but not much — better.

'My dear Sir,' the Rev. J. S. Northcote wrote to Moore in September, 1866, 'I am not surprised at your anxiety about George's progress in spelling and arithmetic — *Maurice* does not seem to me to give the same

[1] This description of Oscott is taken from George Moore's little known story *John Norton* (1895).

cause for uneasiness, though I see you mention them both — No doubt we have many boys younger than Maurice who can spell and do sums better than he can; but there is nothing singular and extraordinary in his backwardness as there is in George's. His marks at the last examination though not high were never below 50 in any of the subjects to which you refer.

'George however is deplorably deficient, and it is by no means easy to see how his defects are to be supplied. The loss of that year or eighteen months during which his health obliged you to remove him from school was very serious. I will try what we can for him between this and Xmas; but if he does not make a decided step in advance by that time, I can only recommend you to have a private tutor for him *altogether*. He is past that age when any master can do much for him in these elementary matters. I am, Dear Sir Yours very truly, J. Spencer Northcote.'

In spite of his want of interest in lessons, Master George was an observant and lively, not to say bumptious boy. Horses were his first passion; then suddenly a chance conversation, overheard, between his parents, made him curious about literature. He has told us how it happened in his *Confessions* (1880).

> Scene a great family coach, drawn by two powerful country horses, lumbers along a narrow Irish road. The ever recurrent signs — long ranges of blue mountains, the streak of bog, the

> rotting cabin, the flock of plover rising from the desolate water. Inside the coach there are two children. They wear new jackets and neckties, their faces are pale with sleep, and the rolling of the coach makes them feel a little sick. It is seven o'clock in the morning. Opposite them are their parents, and they are talking of a novel the world is reading. Did Lady Audley murder her husband? Lady Audley! What a beautiful name! . . .
>
> When we returned home I took the first opportunity of stealing the novel in question . . . I read its successor and its successor. I read until I came to a book called the *Doctor's Wife* — a lady who loved Shelley and Byron. There was magic, there was revelation in the news, and Shelley became my soul's divinity. Why did I love Shelley? Why not attracted to Byron? Shelley! That crystal name, and his poetry also crystalline. I must see it, I must know him . . . The book — a small pocket edition in red boards — opened at 'The Sensitive Plant', and henceforth the little volume never left my pocket and I read the dazzling stanzas by the shores of a pale green Irish lake, comprehending little, and loving a great deal.

With Northcote's approval young George was removed from Oscott when he was about sixteen. For a short time, his father allowed him to do as he liked at Moore Hall; he read a little, he rode and he shot a little, and apart from signs of sexual precocity, he gave no trouble to his parents. If he had an ambition, it

was to win in the Grand National; but he had none of his father's and his uncle's skill in horsemanship.

In 1868, horses suddenly disappeared from Moore Hall, and the stables were totally closed. Moore had decided that he would fight Ireland's battle in Parliament once more. At the election he challenged the whole landlord interest in the county of Mayo, whether it called itself Whig or Tory.

'Dear Anne', Lord Sligo wrote to Miss Browne, 'the agitation goes on to a degree which seems rather ruffianly, and I hear that your nephew passed his Sunday morning abusing me to my tenants. We passed each other this evening without speaking — after thirty years friendship!

'I shall not know the vote of Dominic Browne, but I don't think literally anyone free from the power of the priest will vote for Moore . . . no educated person at any rate . . . Yours affectionately, S.'

This was the same Lord Sligo (the third Marquess) with whom Moore had worked during the Famine. Moore had always had much affection for this kinsman, and in his will made him guardian of his eldest son. Their political disagreement did however make some difference to their friendship and Lord Sligo rightly felt that Moore's language was now indistinguishable from an agrarian agitator's. Moore's son, Colonel Moore, has said that he was far from being a democrat — that he would very much have

preferred to see his own class lead — all he asked of the landlords was that they should admit the rights of tenants to vote as they chose and to a security of tenure. It may be so; perhaps he thought that the way finally to unite all parties in a common interest was to reverse the maxim, *suaviter in modo fortiter in re*, a grave miscalculation, as subsequent history showed, or maybe he looked only to immediate results (his old improvidence showing itself in another form).

Here is a passage from one of his election speeches:

> I shall have the questions settled whether one lord shall drive a hundred human souls to the hustings, another fifty, another a score; whether this or that squire shall call twenty or ten or five, as good men as himself, his voters, and send them up with his brand on their back to vote for an omadhaun at his bidding.

The same recklessness revealed itself in his attitude towards the priest in politics. Moore thundered against ecclesiastical domination when the bishops condemned the Fenians or threw their influence on the side of Whiggery, which meant moderation. But when he found the clergy on his side, as he did in the 1868 election, he had no difficulty in convincing himself that priests were the natural 'tribunes of the people'.

Moore's nearest neighbour, Mr. Blake of Tower Hill, a Whig, retired from the contest, and Moore was elected as one of Mayo's two members, the other being Lord Bingham, a Tory.

He decided upon further retrenchment; he shut up Moore Hall and took a modest house in South Kensington, 39 Alfred Place West, so as to be close to his parliamentary duties. It was also convenient to be in London, because George had consented to go into the army, and he needed 'cramming'. Moore's first effort in the new Parliament was a chivalrous plea for the Fenian prisoners, whose harsh treatment appalled him. The widow of the unfortunate O'Donovan Rossa came to dine with the family, and he helped her to write a letter to Mr. Gladstone, begging for her husband's release on any terms consistent with honour. When nothing availed, Moore delivered a fiery speech at Castlebar; a sentence in it was quoted for a long time afterwards:

> England's sceptre has been the sword, her diadem the black cap, and her throne the gallows during the seven hundred years of her fatal rule.

To the question which will be asked, why, holding such views, did Moore educate his sons for the English army, it is sufficient to reply that besides being an Irish rebel he was an Irish gentleman. Into what other profession but the army could he put a backward and an idle son? And into what other army could George go except the English army?

But George, who had no ambition to die on a battlefield, either for Ireland or for England, spent the time when he should have been at the crammers chasing

skirts about St. John's Wood and going to the betting-shops; Aplely (the butler), who had been left at Moore Hall, received many confidential letters from him, of which this was one:

'Dear Joe, I received your kind letter to-night and I answer it now all that I have to say is that Typheus is a real good horse but I do not believe him to be the soundest one in the world he broke down badly in the off foreleg in his preparation for the 2000 gns — for Derby also and did not run well in the Leger although backed on account of this mishap but nevertheless he is now sound and will run well. Red rice is a good horse and is kept for the Cam — he is the one that beat Scottish Queen in her trial before the 1000 and was in the Ascot Hunt Cup because the public got out and made way for stable cock of the walk.

'I have a great mind to take the doubles.

'If you would like to be on the Caesar I will fix it and what is better put you on at the post. I am George Moore.'

The father, perhaps too occupied with Ireland's battle, failed to recall his son to order. An Irish measure of great importance had just been introduced into the Commons, Gladstone's first Land Bill. It was a serious attempt to deal with the agrarian problem in Ireland. Under it no tenant, who paid his rent, could be evicted without a claim on the landlord for such improvements as he might have made on the land.

The Bill thus reversed the evil principle of the Encumbered Estates Act which, as John Morley has said (*Life of Gladstone*), had invited the purchase of the estate of an insolvent landlord upon precisely the same principles as governed the purchase of his picture and his furniture.

Moore supported this Bill as a remedy for 'the barbarous social altercations', which disgraced Ireland; he did not pretend to be completely satisfied, but his able speeches pleased Gladstone, who asked him to represent the British Government on the Alabama Arbitration Commission, with large emoluments. But Moore, who believed that he would soon convert Gladstone to Federal Home Rule, refused the tempting bait, the acceptance of which would in any case have given him a bad name with the extreme Nationalists, with whom he remained on friendly terms. The Fenians trusted him, and the story goes that he maintained communication with O'Donovan Rossa, then in Chatham gaol, by the 'underground railroad', and had exact information before asking a question of the Home Secretary about Fenian prisoners. The messages were carried in and out by a Highland Scottish Warder, an ex-Life Guardsman, who refused to take a penny for his work, beyond what would cover his expenses.

Now by an irony of fate this remarkable man's life ended whilst he was in the midst of a dispute which suddenly arose between him and the Mayo peasants whom he had so long protected. The rents at Ballin-

tubber were paid in 1869; but the next year there was a conspiracy to withhold them. Threatening letters were sent to him.

'if it is supposed', he wrote to the young priest Father Lavelle, an ardent admirer of his politics, 'that because I advocate the rights of the tenants, I am to surrender my own rights as a landlord; if it is suspected that I am so enamoured of a seat in Parliament that I am ready to surrender my own self-respect rather than imperil its possession; if it is hoped that because I alone of all the landlords in the parish of Ballintubber have not cleared the estate, the people are to send me to gaol . . .

'I am determined to vindicate my own rights without fear or flinching, and if it be necessary to evict every tenant who refuses to pay his rent in full. . . .'

In pursuance of his resolution he crossed to Ireland with the intention of answering the blackmail by word of mouth. He arrived at Moore Hall on Good Friday, 1870, and consulted with his agent Sebastian Nolan, and with Lavelle. On Sunday he was tired and took to his bed; he would see no visitors. The end came on Tuesday without the slightest expectation. When Aplely called him that morning he was unconscious. He had had a stroke, the doctor said. 'He died of cerus apoplexy,' wrote Father Lavelle, 'heart break, I call it.'

Mrs. Moore and George, who was deeply affected (for he had loved his warm-hearted and impetuous

father), came over for the funeral, which was attended by twenty priests and a huge concourse of the people of Mayo. Representatives of the gentry were conspicuously absent. Through the dripping woods George Henry was brought to Kiltoom for burial in the family mausoleum, where his grandfather, his parents and his brother lay. Father Lavelle addressed the crowd; he descanted at great length on the political virtues of the dead man and on the villainies of the Whigs, but made no reference to the Ballintubber conspirators. The last rites were then accomplished. The new owner of Moore Hall stood by, and registered a vow that he would never do anything to deserve a popular funeral.

CHAPTER XVI

THE MOORES FACE THE WORLD

The affairs of the family were found to be in a better state than might have been imagined. George Henry had not left his widow and children in bankruptcy. Mrs. Moore had a secure £500 a year as a first charge upon his properties, and the younger children had their small inheritances, of parcels of land and provision for their education. Everything else went to George, with the entail in Maurice's favour, both being under twenty-one at the time of their father's death. It appears to have been believed that George should eventually have £2000 a year; but at no time did his independent income reach to such a sum, with allowance made for the maintenance of Moore Hall and for his mother's annuity.

The expenses at Moore Hall were cut down to a minimum during George's minority, so as to enable Mrs. Moore to remain in London, where she wished to be until her children's education was completed. Many servants were dismissed, and the stables were let fall into decay. In the holidays all were together at Alfred Place, the boys disputing a good deal among themselves, though George and Maurice, between whom there grew up a real affection, did some serious

reading in history and philosophy. Maurice failed the first time at the Army examination; and when the second time came his mother, beginning at the bottom of the list, was a long time before finding his name, which was in the first ten. He had worked hard; if it had been possible he would have preferred going into the French army rather than into the English, for he had picked up as a child many of his father's political sentiments.

George proposed to study art to the delights of which he had been persuaded by a distant cousin named James Brown, a painter of pseudo-heroic pictures, who had a studio in London. George Henry Moore had been Brown's patron, perhaps the only one, and he had bought a Crucifixion by him for the chapel of Carnucan and the enormous canvas 'Death of an Indian Chief' for the staircase wall at Moore Hall. Brown, who took complete possession of George for a while, told him that he must go to Paris if truly he wished to become a painter. He had to wait till he came of age; but punctually, at twenty-one, he left for Paris, accompanied by a man-servant. The manservant was a son of old Mullowney, also named William, a tall gaunt man in the thirties, with rather savage manners, but intelligent. Young William kept Joe Aplely, who was always at Moore Hall, informed of their doings.

'My dear Joseph,' he wrote, from the Hotel Russie, on the Boulevard, 'I must really beg of you to forgive

me this time as I had no idea it was so long since I wrote to you but I promise you it shall never happen again you need not accuse me of having forgotten you. No Joseph I have not nor never shall and if I did I would be the most ungrateful dog in the world.

'I begin to hate Paris I am broiled to death both day and night and what I shall do for the next two I don't know but in other respects it is the most beautiful place in the wourld, but brandy for two francs a bottle and claret for a song peaches and grapes enough for two pence and women for the asking and after all like you I must say I like London the best, but a good deal of it, because I cant speak French, well I went to see the Grand Prix run of course I should put a couple of pounds on Mr. Jeremy Mary's crack after winning the English Derby it appeared a gift for him. I saw him on the course and he looked like a picture but got down well beaten to my Good Luck. I did not back a horse before since last Derby twelve months nor am I likely to again.

'Mr. George is as happy as a prince here, and not a foolish hare in his body but so good natured a person never lived. He will be a great Artist he can lick Jem Brown into saddle bags but he works very hard from 8 o'clock in the morning till 5 in the evening. He is the devil to please, there is nothing right when out of humour. Dear Joseph I hope both you and all your family are well as I hope to see you all next Spring please God as we are sure to go this time at long last.

It is a dam shame about the money, they ought to be hung. I remain, my dear Joseph, Wm. Mulowney.'

As George Moore's life in Paris is without much bearing on the history of Moore Hall, and has been so often recounted by himself, it will be unnecessary to speak of it at any length in this book. When he found, as he did soon, that he was without the gift to be a painter, he wisely gave up the effort and worked hard to train himself as a writer. Almost as illiterate as his valet at the start, he showed great courage and resource in his effort to recover from the handicap of his bad education; at no time after leaving home did he behave like a good-for-nothing. To his mother — his 'dearest mama' — he always wrote with both candour and warmth. Mrs. Moore never sought to dominate her children. She had decided not to repeat the mistakes of her mother-in-law, and when George boasted of his irreligion and of his acquaintance with the brilliant and vicious society of Paris, she raised no futile protest.

George's taste and his choice of friends improved, as his passion for art and literature grew. Presently he began to haunt about the doors of the most famous Frenchmen of the epoch, such as Zola, Degas and Manet, and was even taken to the bosoms of the most cultured families of the high bourgeoisie in Paris, the Blanches, the Halevys and others, whom he charmed by his unexpected sayings and his eccentric if fluent French.

In 1875, the house at Alfred Place was given up, and henceforth Mrs. Moore spent most of her time at Moore Hall. Augustus and Julian were still at English schools; her daughter was at Tours, so that it was lonely for her in Ireland. She always hoped that George would settle down at Moore Hall, best of all with a rich bride. George sent her amusing accounts of his pursuit of an heiress in Paris; but he had already decided in his heart to be a bachelor.

Meanwhile Maurice had passed out of Sandhurst with honours. His letters to his mother were not so expansive as those of George, but they came with greater regularity. He went first to India with the Connaught Rangers, then he was stationed in Mauritius, and at Capetown; and a little later, after the British disaster at Isandula, he saw service in the campaign for the subjugation of the Zulus.

'My dear Mother,' he wrote from the Lower Tugela on June 13th, 1879, 'I write you one line to say that we start for the next advance into Zululand in a few days, Monday next I think. I may not be able to write again for some time as at the front postage is not regular, even if I had the opportunity to write. There are rumours of peace but no one believes them. I fancy we shall be here one or two more fights first.

'There is a great deal of sickness here but luckily so far I have escaped; almost everyone else has suffered more or less and great numbers have died of typhoid

and dysentry. Somehow I never felt better in my life.

'I got some photographs done in London, I forget if I sent you one. I also send a group of officers of the regiment done the other day; it has made everyone hideous except myself. I don't think I have yet become quite as black as I appear there. One cannot expect much from photographs in Zululand. With love to Nina and everyone I remain your affectionate son Maurice Moore.'

About a month later the Zulus admitted themselves beaten, and were asking for the protection of the conquerors. It had proved easier for British arms and statesmanship to deal with Cetewayo than with the Irish, who now once again showed that they had never been subjugated. The mind of England, in 1879, was violently withdrawn from distant campaigns and riveted on Ireland and, in Ireland, particularly on Mayo, where but a few leagues from Moore Hall, at Westport, Michael Davitt — with Father Lavelle beside him on the platform — had lately founded the Land League which 'struck at the roots of modern society by breaking all forms of contracts' (John Morley's *Life of Gladstone*).

Harsh evictions, such as could be laid at the door of a few landlords, were the pretext, and the occasion was the sudden renewal of agricultural distress. 'It is the system which produces distress that must be destroyed', Parnell declared; and this meant that the Land League

while nominally a movement against unjust rents, really aimed at the final extinction of the political and economic power of the owners of the soil. In practice, the agitation made very little distinction between the just and the unjust landlord; rents were withheld from both alike; and tenants, who were perfectly satisfied with their conditions, were forced to join the League. The organizers and leaders (in Ireland, if not in America) set their faces against murder; boycott was the weapon recommended; and crimes of homicide were conspicuously fewer than in the Tithe War, though the maiming of cattle, the threatening letter, and the digging of graves for unpopular persons were common enough.

CHAPTER XVII

MOORE HALL AFTER THE LAND LEAGUE

Mayo was almost like a military camp. The Land League had set siege to Captain Boycott; and the Orangemen from the north were on the way to his rescue; fifty of them escorted the Captain and his belongings safely from Claremorris to Ballinrobe, all the roads being lined by police and military. It was not thought safe that Mrs. Moore should remain at Moore Hall; she took a house in Dublin for the bad winter of 1880-81, where she had with her her daughter and, for a part of the time, Maurice, now back from the Zulu war. George was summoned from Paris for a family consultation. He arrived in a bad temper, having learnt that his uncle, Joe Blake, the racing man, no longer wished to collect rents on the Moore property, and that the estate accounts were in a muddle. Joe Blake lived with his brother Llewelyn at Ballinafad; the brothers were bachelors and well-off, and Joe did not see why he should risk his life, or even his popularity, on his nephew's account.

In the upshot, after a good deal of recrimination, George renounced Paris, and went down to Mayo

with his sister to face the Land League. His narrow rimmed hat, long sandy hair, French trousers and tight patent leather shoes afforded him some protection; no one would have had the heart to shoot at the poor poet. One laughed at him; but he showed some skill in his dealings with the conspirators, and with the aid of a neighbour, Tom Ruttledge, who offered to take on the agency in place of Blake, he succeeded in getting his finances into order. Some trees were cut down without damaging the appearance of the demesne, and with the price of the timber he met a deficit in the estate accounts and a loan of £200 which had been negotiated for him during his minority by Aplely with a prosperous tenant on the Ballintubber lands. In the meantime the Government adopted a policy of coercion accompanied by a Land Reform which gave Irish tenants fixity of tenure and set up machinery for arbitration on rents. Though no miracle was wrought, conditions of life in the west underwent some improvement, and during the winters following, which he also spent at Moore Hall, George was able to give his whole attention to literary work. He had come back from Paris, he said, a little doubtful whether beautiful prose could be written in English, and so he ransacked his grandfather's library for evidence that the English language was still a literary potentiality; but not happening upon Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, which might have reassured him, he sent to London for a new work by

Walter Pater which had just been announced, *Marius the Epicurean.*

> At every page this story seemed to have been written for me, and at moments it seemed as if Pater had turned not only my existence but even the very circumstances of my life, for Marius lived in an old family mansion, one which he was soon to leave to go to Rome, drawn thither by literature — a literary career having become a necessity through the extravagance of an ancestor; and my house, a Georgian mansion, standing on a hill-top, amid branching woods, was also neglected; like Marius's house it had fallen into the lag end of its fortunes; and while wandering round the ruined stables in which had stood a hundred horses, and through the abandoned gardens on whose high wall a peacock, the last of a long race, screamed for a mate, I remembered that my own life was to live with my widowed mother, leaving her every spring for London, just before the beech woods began to swell into pink buds.

If George Henry had been a laggard in making engagements with literature, his sons bade fair to atone for his fault. At thirty-five George was already a successful novelist, the author of *A Modern Lover*, *A Mummer's Wife* and *A Drama in Muslin.* Maurice, though he was happy in the army, spoke of retirement sometime when he would put his pen at the service of his country, or edit the literary remains of his father and grandfather. Augustus upon leaving school had at once set about earning a living in Fleet

Street, as an opera-librettist and a contributor to the humorous journals. A literary career was also spoken of for the youngest boy, the most studious of the four, who was acquiring a unique knowledge of book bindings and book collections, the scores of French light operas and the origins of the legend of *Tristan and Isolde*.

For a while George acted to some extent in place of a father to his two younger brothers and to his sister. For all his conceits a vein of worldly wisdom ran through his character; but he had not the patience to exercise that influence or authority with success. 'I hope Nina is not going to bring any more children into this miserable world,' he would say (his sister had married Mr. Kilkelly, then a briefless barrister). Or: 'I trust that Julian has given up that dream of literature; but what is he going to do for himself?' Mrs. Moore defended her children against George's asperities with gentle humour. 'So he now wants to be a vice-consul,' George would reply, 'and I am to ask Lord Ardilaun to use his influence with Lord Salisbury. I should like to know what influence Lord Ardilaun can have with Lord Salisbury, because he attended a meeting at the Conservative Club. My dear mother, common sense seems to be denied to you all. I can ask Lady Ardilaun to do me a favour, and I believe she will do what she can; there the matter must end.' Augustus also laid himself open to George's criticism. Augustus was a very clever young man,

with the quickest wit in the family; but he lacked prudence and enlightened self-interest, and spent too much of his time in ruffling Fleet Street, resembling his father in that he would never beware of entrance into a quarrel.

Towards the close of the 'eighties both Maurice and Augustus married. Maurice's wife was Irish and from the west; but she was a Protestant, a member of the family of Handcocks from Carantrilla in Co. Galway. Augustus chose an English bride, the daughter of Sir John Monckton, Town Clerk of the City of London. George, who continued single, liked both his sisters-in-law, and he was far from displeased that his brothers by their marriages should have arrested the process of the Moores, begun when his great grandfather had changed his religion on going to Spain, toward what he called contemptuously the Catholic Celt.

In 1891, when Parnell was fighting for his life against English nonconformists and Irish priests, the Moores were on the side of the forlorn hope. Julian Moore attended Parnell's meeting at Ballina and took a place on the platform.

A year or two later Maurice returned from India, and while passing through London met with a warm reception from his elder brother, now in the best of humours, for his story, *Esther Waters*, was enjoying a resounding success. The book was inscribed to

Maurice, and appropriately, because many of the characters and accessories of the narrative were drawn from memories, common to the two elder sons of George Henry Moore, of the racing stables at Moore Hall. Mr. Gladstone read *Esther Waters*, and took it as a warning against the frequentation of the race-course and the betting shop by the lower classes; he sent an approving postcard. *The Sporting Times*, assuming that Mr. Gladstone had interpreted the intentions of the author aright, wrote sadly: 'Our mind was carried back thirty-three years to the Doncaster Spring Meeting, and the vagaries of a handsome little Irish colt named Slieve Carne . . . The colours of his jockey were bird's-eye blue, and he belonged to Mr. G. H. Moore, an *Irish gentleman*, who would probably have disinherited his son could he have foreseen that he would write such a book as *Esther Waters*. Maurice kept up the racing traditions of the Moores, and while stationed at Boyle a little later won the National Hunt Cup at Punchestown and was Master of the Boyle Harriers. When he wanted a horse he used to go down to the Moore farm at Carn, leased by his uncle Tom Blake, who had a young herd galloping all over this wild place of heather and rock.

Maurice, George had said, meant more to him than anyone else, and when they met again in the flesh, George's best expectations were fulfilled. The Major looked every inch a soldier, spare and bronzed; and

if his life and ideas seemed set in a convention there had been enough straying from the normal among the Moores already. As the author of *Esther Waters*, George was now a person of account in London, and he had saved money both from his rents now punctually paid (under Mr. Arthur Balfour's firm administration of the law) and from his literary earnings. He would have liked to do something for Maurice; a Major's pay, added to a small inheritance, is not much upon which to bring up a family. But what could he do beyond being godfather to Maurice's elder son, who, should he himself never marry, would one day be his heir and the owner of Moore Hall. He sought in his mind, and then offered to write to Gerald Balfour, or to speak to Mrs. Asquith, so as to see whether a place might not be found for his brother in Dublin Castle. Maurice Moore's admirable military record, on the one hand, and on the other, the name he bore — that of a popular Catholic family with Irish traditions — qualified him admirably for one of the numerous Government jobs which were springing up everywhere, as a consequence of the new policy of combining kindness with firmness in Ireland. But now it appeared that Maurice too could not be regulated by custom and that he shrank from the loss of independence which such employment would have entailed. He had his ideas about Ireland, but they were not those of Mr. Gerald Balfour, but of poetry and of ideal. Besides

he was quite happy soldiering. What with his writing and his love affairs and one thing or another, George was very busy, and not being pertinacious in another's interests he allowed the matter to drop. But had Maurice then found a position in Dublin Castle, the later history not only of the Moore family, but of Ireland might have been different — and perhaps more prosperous.

CHAPTER XVIII

GEORGE MOORE THE FOURTH HEARS IRISH VOICES IN THE CHELSEA ROAD

In May 1895, the death of Mrs. Moore brought about a sudden assemblage of the family at Moore Hall. Not since childhood had the four brothers and the sister been together in the place where all had been born. Ivy was grown over one side of the house; a gap showed somewhere in the woods; and one of the hollies on the lawn was gone. Mrs. Moore had feared premature burial, and some days passed before she was taken to Kiltoom; so there was time to notice such things and much else, and for George to seek words with which to express the enchanted silence of the lake, the pink buds of the beech unclosing, the grey reflection of the islands and the reeds. He found that he had not forgotten how every curve of the lake was bent, and that he knew the shape of every island. 'We were anxious', he wrote afterwards in *Memoirs of My Dead Life*, 'to ask each other questions, to hear each other's news, and we were anxious to see the landscape that we had not seen, at least not together, for many years; and I remember how we were tempted

out of the house by the soft sunlight floating on the lawn. . . .'

What should now be done with Moore Hall was a problem. George proposed that his youngest brother should remain and look after the place; but Julian Moore said that he would prefer to find lodgings in London where he could better pursue his studies of the Isolde legend and of the histories of bindings and of book collections. It was therefore decided that Tom Ruttledge, who had an office at Westport, should keep an eye on all, and if need arose to take important decisions, consult with Maurice Moore, whose regiment was now stationed in Ireland, at Mullingar. All George's landed property including the Moore Hall estate was entailed in Maurice's favour by their father's will; but at any time since his coming of age George could have broken the entail, subject to his mother's consent, and become absolute owner. He now broke the entail, not because he had any other heir but Maurice in mind, but because Ruttledge said that it was usual to do so, as indeed it was, and the safest course. These business decisions were always disagreeable to George, and he was glad to be finished with them quickly and to return to his handsome London flat, with the Aubusson carpet, the pictures by Manet and Berthe Morisot, and to the manuscript of his new novel *Evelyn Innes*; before going he admonished his brothers and sister to live within their incomes, and said that any of them could have

the use of the house whenever they liked, though the first choice should be with Maurice.

The lodge was occupied by an old carpenter of intelligence and independence who held strange views and ideas, and spoke of a story about George which he would not divulge till he came to his deathbed. On the estate there were a few very small farms, dating from the time of George Henry, who had placed some poor people there as a recompense for their having resisted the proselytizing efforts of a Protestant Bishop who owned land at Partry. There was a steward, and one servant at least was kept, old Bridget Kelly who had been confidential maid to Mrs. Louisa Moore. Aplely was dead, having left behind him in the neighbourhood a poor wretched family struggling to keep a little shop; of the retainers who hung on the most notable was Alec MacDonald, learned on the topography of Carra, who still clung to the traditional dress of his forefathers, heavy frieze, swallow-tail coat and tall hat. The costume might have appeared ludicrous on anyone else but on old Alec it was most natural. He had pretensions to gentility, or his family must have had, because the country people invariably addressed him as Sir, although sometimes omitting the courtesy of hat lifting, a fine point of precedence which will be readily understood by those familiar with Mayo etiquette forty years ago.

The Augustus Moores with their little boy and the Kilkellys spent one summer at Moore Hall; but the

most frequent visitors were the wife and the two children of the soldier brother. The beautiful melancholy lake and the poor murdered house are the memory remotest from the present day of Colonel Moore's surviving son, who is now a rancher in Wyoming. The big houses in the vicinity were still mostly occupied; but Maurice and Ulick did not need the company of others of their own age; for however it might be with the old, time at Moore Hall could never hang heavily on the hands of children. Their first playground was the yellow strand below the great lawn; the time soon came when they could begin to enjoy all the sporting facilities which life at Moore Hall offered. Lough Carra teemed with wild fowl of every description, and they used to hunt the rare little martin that still survived among the old oaks of Derrinhuish wood; every wood, every bog was full of game, and the demesne of the Blakes at Tower Hill could be poached for rabbits which were scarce at Moore Hall.

It was a memorable day when first they were allowed on the lake with old Alec. Alec took them first to Connor's island with its sombre pine woods where (he said) one of his ancestors had hidden from the Red coats in '98, when John Moore contrived the escape from Castlebar. A great cloud of cormorants rose as they approached the ruins of Hags Island, and passed it to where, a mile distant, lay Castle Island, the island fortress upon which William

Barrett, the Welshman, had raised his standard after his historic march from the coast in the twelfth century, wielding from thence a paramount authority over all the lake, until years later his spearmen succumbed to the superior armament of the great Norman baron, Adam de Staunton. As the boat drifted along, old Alec pointed to the sunken causeway zigzagging across the bottom of the lake to the Kiltoom shore.

Centuries ago on that very strand Welsh footmen with spear and battle-axe disputed the advance of the Norman invader. All day long the battle raged, with De Staunton leading his knights again and again to the charge. But Irish and Welsh stood firm and it was not until evening when De Burgo arrived with reinforcements that Barrett and his men had to give way. On old Alec's tongue their retreat to the safety of the castle across the sunken causeway was a tale of daring dramatically told. But their safety was precarious. With logs cut in the woods of Derrinhuish De Staunton constructed rafts, floating his men across to the island where after a short siege the garrison were forced to capitulate.

As they turned homeward old Alec drew the boys' attention to a great spring rising dark in the middle of the bay. A holy spring it was, he said, blessed by St. Patrick himself. 'But how did he get out?' little Ulick asked, 'had he a boat?' 'No,' the old man replied, 'it was on the mainland once — in the big hole by the

old abbey in Kiltoom wood; and seeing a look of amazement come on the boys' faces he explained that a party of Cromwell's cavalry had desecrated the blessed water by washing their clothes in it, which so angered the saint in heaven that he caused the spring to leap out into the lake. 'A mighty leap, even for a holy spring,' he observed, 'but how else can you explain the large hole; and now', he added, 'look at that great black rock rearing out of the water at the edge of the spring. They will be passing over the ford,' a reference to the crossing from Muckloon village by way of Marban's hermitage on Church Island to the Partry shore. Five miles away the rock was, yet it was used as a sign post. When not submerged the ford was passable.

When he could do so Major Moore came over from Boyle or Mullingar, or from wherever he might be stationed. There was nothing he liked better than keeping an eye on the place and finding odd jobs to do on it. One wet holiday was spent in trying to put the family papers in some order, and in reading the bound volumes of his grandfather's manuscript history of the French Revolution. Hardly dreaming that it would interest him, he told his brother George of his literary exploration in the attics of Moore Hall. To his surprise, George begged him to continue his researches, and inquired what the executors of the second George had done with the £500 which had

been left to defray the expenses of publishing the history. The work had never been finished, his brother said; and some discussion ensued as to whether it might still be edited. But by whom, George or Maurice? George thought it would be a suitable duty for the Major's leisure, though a much better subject could be found for him in the history of the Moores, because the rise and fall of a family was at least as interesting as the rise and fall of a nation. The implied view that his race had had its day was not agreeable to Maurice, who was now absorbed in the new movements arising in Ireland, the Gaelic League, co-operative farming and so on, and hoped that an order of good feeling, kindness and affection might yet be established in which the Irish gentry would take their place.

These movements were now known to George himself, who indeed — and the news caused some surprise to those in Ireland who remembered him chiefly as the author of *Parnell and his Island* — was giving much of his time in London to W. B. Yeats and Edward Martyn and to their project for the foundation of an Irish National Theatre. George had never had any politics in particular; but, from a literary point of view, he was prepared to welcome the gospel of the Gaelic League, the Gaelic language for the Gael, for he had lately been inclined to think that the English language and literature, fatally infected by journalese, were on their deathbeds,

and he spoke of voices in the Chelsea Road which summoned him to an Irish mission. Some personal misfortunes, including a love affair gone awry, also afflicted George's English life at this time, and contributed to a conjuring up for him of a very ugly idea of the Imperialist England which was then heading towards the Boer War. In his letters to Maurice, he attributed to him what he called his conversion; but Maurice was uncertain whether he should lay the flattering unction to his soul. One could never be sure of George.

He came over to Ireland more than once, but did not stay at Moore Hall, since his business was Yeats's Irish theatre and acquaintance with other collaborators in the movement, such as George Russell (A.E.), Douglas Hyde and John Eglinton.

'I sent you a proof of the article on my own funeral,' he wrote to Maurice after one of these visits. 'But as you do not mention these things, I suppose you did not get it. I have just returned from Ireland which I love more and more. I went with Russell to visit the sacred places — druidic remains, and was much interested in them and in Russell who is a heavenly man. I left Dundalk seeing Ireland through a haze of divinities. The Irish language is going strong.'

He had previously told his brother that he wished his ashes to be scattered on Hampstead Heath; but he now laid upon his heirs the duty of bringing

his body to Carra to have it burned upon one of the islands. If some larches on the hillside were felled, the pyre might rise fifty feet high. He made a draft of a provisional Pagan will which he sent to his various relatives.

> If [it ran in one portion] the conditions are so disagreeable to my brother Maurice that he cannot bring himself to see that the disposal of my remains are carried out according to my wishes my property, lands, money, pictures and furniture, shall go to my brother Augustus Moore; and in the event of his declining to carry out my wishes, regarding the disposal of my remains, all my property shall go to my brother Julian Moore; and if he should refuse to carry out my wishes regarding the disposal of my remains, all the said property shall go to my friend Sir William Eden, who will I feel sure, take a sad pleasure in giving effect to the wishes of his old friend.

CHAPTER XIX

COLONEL MAURICE MOORE REVIVES THE IRISH LANGUAGE AT MOORE HALL

THE next thing that was heard of George was that, driven by hatred of the Boer War from London, he had taken a house in Ely Place, Dublin, wherefrom he intended to assist at the revival of the Irish language. Some asked why, when he already owned a house in Ireland, did he not go there, and it was remarked that Moore Hall would be an admirable centre from which to spread his new belief, as it stood in a district where Irish was still spoken by a good many. But he replied that he was neither a recluse, nor a bookworm, and that he needed friends who would drop in for conversation after dinner. Nor would Moore Hall be lost to the language revival, as his nephews would be learning their Irish from there.

The war in South Africa had begun, and Maurice and Ulick — Rory and Toby as they were commonly called — were now at Athlone, waiting until the Major should receive his orders. They lived with their father and mother in a house near the barracks where the 2nd Battalion of the Connaught Rangers was

stationed. On a day which is still vivid in Maurice's memory he was taken to see the troops marching in columns of fours across Sarsfield Bridge. His father on a big black horse rode by the side of Colonel O'Grady, while the band played alternately 'Garryowen' and 'The Girl I left Behind Me'.

Soon afterwards Mrs. Moore returned with the boys to Moore Hall. She must regard it as her home, George had said, at least as long as Maurice was in South Africa. It was very generous of George; but she had hardly bargained for being assailed almost every week with a letter, pressing Irish for the children on her attention, and even threatening disinheritance if they did not rapidly turn into native speakers.

Her husband was going through the fiercest fighting on the Tugela, and she was expected to occupy her thoughts with this latest of George's fads. What could she do to satisfy him while her husband was away? She had been hearing Maurice talk about Irish for a long time, of course; but her own friends were not Gaelic Leaguers, and she had no notion how one found out about 'learning Irish'. Bridget Kelly, though an Irish speaker, could not offer any advice. No one knew how old Bridget was; she was certainly too old to change into a governess, and besides she thought it extremely ridiculous for gentry to be wanting to know Irish. It was a pity, because the boys dearly liked this honest loyal old woman, whose hands were so hard that she could pick live coals from the fire.

'Rory will bury me dacently', she used to say. They would spend hours listening to her accounts of the family in Mrs. Louisa Moore's day. She substantiated all the ghost stories. She had even seen the great letters of fire, 'I am happy', in ancient Greek, which appeared on the drawing-room wall on the exact day in 1829, when John, the historian's son, had died in London as the result of a riding accident.

It was Bridget Kelly who, one day, just after Mrs. Moore had received one of George's annoying letters, burst into the room where Mrs. Moore was with her boys, crying: 'Arrah maam, the Major is kilt entirely. Sure a peeler is downstairs with a telegram from Castlebar.' She was excitable in the extreme, and this was an occasion which called for her best dramatic efforts. The whole thing was pure imagination, but she set up a great wailing which continued until the Major's next letter arrived from South Africa, whereupon she took the opportunity for appropriate celebration. In the letter, which had more about Irish in it than about the war, the Major said that, far off as he was, he had contrived to make arrangements about Irish lessons for the children by communicating with the Secretary of the local branch of the Gaelic League, who would send a teacher to Moore Hall. His brother, he added, was satisfied with these arrangements, and would be unlikely to give any further trouble.

The teacher arrived, a dark earnest young man;

but the wishes of Rory and of Toby had been left out of account, and it was found that they only tried to baffle their instructor. The tactics adopted were passive resistance, and the summit of their instructor's achievements was to get them to say the word 'castle' in Irish.

'The Irish tutor is now at Moore Hall,' George Moore wrote to his brother, 'and I am sure the children are speaking Irish every day. I fancy there will be no difficulty now about the boys. I fancy they will know Irish and what is nice about it is that they don't speak English with a brogue. Their mother managed this very well. There is a great difference between the Irish language and the English as spoken with a thick brogue. One I love, the other I have no objection in confessing I hate.'

The Major himself was learning Gaelic in the intervals of the campaign; he had brought out to South Africa a small library of grammars and phrase books. The revival of primitive languages was in the air, and one day while riding across the veldt, he fell into conversation with Lovat of Lovat's Horse, and discovered that Lovat's leisure was being used like his own, the Gaelic in this case being from the Highlands of Scotland. George, in Ely Place, Dublin, felt a glow of satisfaction as he pictured his brother and Lovat sitting around a camp fire in the evenings and acquiring a direct knowledge of the language

from soldiers of Irish and Highland regiments. He might have remained quiet for a while had his brother not sent him a long letter descriptive of the concentration camps and of other methods which were being employed by the British for subjugation of the Boer civilian population. The Major spoke of the shame with which he carried out many orders. All George's hatred of the war came back to him in an instant, and he hurried with Maurice's letter to the office of the *Freeman's Journal*, and there dictated it to a typist. 'But', said the editor, 'I can't print a letter unless you give me the writer's name — the name need not be published.' 'Take it or leave it', George replied, 'I won't give you the name, but I can vouch that it is genuine, and you must admit that it is excellently written.' The editor published the letter which was reprinted in *The Times* and made the subject of questions in Parliament. A newspaper at the Cape also quoted from it, with the result that two members of the staff — one of them Mr. Malan, now a South African Cabinet Minister — were sentenced to short terms of imprisonment. George never breathed word of the authorship to anyone.

The tall dark earnest young man had by this time relinquished the unequal struggle to interest Rory and Toby in the Irish language. When he went from them in despair, Aran islanders and local linguists, male and female, were called in, Uncle George saying, in reply

to Mrs. Moore's protests, that it didn't matter how dirty such persons might be. These teachers succeeded each other in rapid succession. The boys stood, figuratively, like the Rock of Gibraltar, that is, until Mr. Garvey appeared (this was considerably later, a year or two after their father's return from the Boer War).

Mr. Garvey was a Tower Hill tenant, an elderly man, superior in manner, sharp and scholarly. A kindly old man whose shrewd native intelligence carried him to as great a degree of triumph over the boys as was possible in the circumstances. His first scheme for gaining their confidence was shrewd in the extreme. He took them to poach rabbits in the Tower Hill demesne. They returned from the excursion with several dead rabbits and two or three surreptitiously implanted Irish words. Next he took them across to show them the ruins of Adam de Staunton's great fortress, Castle Carra. They descended with him to the dungeons and played with the great iron rings cemented into the walls; the boys had a hellish design of using some trick to tie their teacher up to one of the rings, but refrained when he offered to show them the old banqueting hall and a secret passage which debouched on the peak of the battlements. Here, seated high above the lake, he told stories of the rise and fall of the de Stauntons. The name had become Mc Evilly, and, in Elizabeth's time, an officer of the Queen, a Captain Bowen, secured the lands and castles, which were never returned to their rightful owners.

Mr. Garvey's plan was to provide his pupils with an imaginative motive for becoming Irish speakers. He had first to instil into them some romantic idea of their country, and, instead of making them read dull political histories, he gave them new eyes with which to see the scenes in which they had been brought up, thus continuing the work begun by old Alec. There were other excursions — to Castle Burke across the bay, or *Cushlaun Kilvoynell*, as Rory now insisted on calling it, and to Ballintubber. Castle Burke was another de Staunton stronghold, smaller and more compact than Castle Carra, and still in excellent condition except for the roof, with an interesting room where, by an ingenious device, undesirable guests could be placed and dumped, bed and all, into the lake.

At Ballintubber, which was still a part of the Moore property, the boys were instructed in the traditional stories told in the neighbourhood. Either Roderick O'Connor, the last monarch of Ireland, or his half-brother, Cathal Crovderg, had built the abbey, roofing and shingling it with oak timber. The people said that Cathal Crovderg, the illegitimate son of the King of Connaught, was the builder, and gave a miraculous account of his life, which began with the queen's attempt to prevent his entry into the world. The queen, it appears, had recourse to witches and they handed her a magical string, with three intricate knots, saying that, as long as she kept the string in her possession, Gearrog Ny-Morgan, against whom its

magical properties were directed, could never be delivered of a child. Before, however, the string had been fully endued with the intended charm, Cathal thrust his right hand into the external world; farther he could not move! The king's concubine wished for death, but could not die. So it continued until a certain good man heard of the string, and asked an audience of the queen who had no suspicion of his design. He told her that the principal news in the west of Connaught was that Gearrog Ny-Morgan had brought forth a son for the King of Connaught. When the queen heard it, she took the magical string, and angrily cast it into the fire, calling down all sorts of execrations on the head of the old sorceress, who had so deceived her. No sooner had the last knot of the string been destroyed by the fire, than the king's son was fully ushered into the theatre of his future greatness; but his crov or that part of his hand, from the wrist out, which he had thrust into the world before the magical string was perfected, was as red as blood, from which he received the name of Crovderg (Red handed). The child who had all the appearance of royalty in his countenance, was protected by the friars against the queen's vengeance, till at last he contrived his escape to Leinster, where his mother supported him for many years by her labour. Time passed on, until at last a bearer of public news from Connaught came into the field where Crovderg, with several others was employed in reaping rye. The bearer of news announced that the

King of Connaught was dead, and that the people, assembled in council, would have no one but Cathal Crovderg his son for his successor. Whereupon Cathal's heart bounded for joy, and pulling off the mitten, with which he constantly kept the red hand concealed, he exhibited the proof of his identity.

There was a St. Patrick's Well at Ballintubber, a thing not to be missed. Tradition attributed it to the saint; but even Mr. Garvey could not explain the distinct impression of a human hand and knee, deep in the solid granite. By the grave of a priest-killer, called Sean-na-Saggart, he would grow loquacious. The man had been himself killed in the sanctuary of the abbey and his body laid in the grounds; and Mr. Garvey, on their first visit, had invited the boys to observe the ash tree growing on the grave. 'You will see,' he said, 'that the limb touches the very centre of the grave. It was prophesied when he was buried that an ash tree would grow from his head, and send down a limb to pierce his heart.' 'But will his heart be there, Mr. Garvey?' Rory asked. 'Only the abbot can tell you that,' was the reply. 'But who is the abbot?' 'Your uncle, George Moore.' The boys always meant to ask their uncle whether he really was Abbot of Ballintubber; but, when next they met him, they forgot to put the question.

Meanwhile Uncle George, up in Ely Place, was writing many beautiful and passionate descriptions of

Lough Carra for his new novel, *The Lake*, the story of a young priest's revolt against celibacy and the loneliness of Irish country life. When Reilly, the new steward, used to bring up the accounts to him in Dublin, he would lay down the figures and say, 'I wonder is it dim over the Lake to-day, or does the sun light up the green water'. But George Moore had now come to fear that neither art nor literature would arise in Ireland, so long as the minds of the people remained in the grasp of the priesthood. The death of a small primitive language would be, he said, a sad spectacle, but what was the use of reviving Irish for a people who would be able to do nothing with it.

CHAPTER XX

RELIGIOUS DISSENSION

The Boer War came wearily to its end, and Maurice Moore, whose dislike of depriving small nations of their independence had not prevented him from distinguishing himself in the campaign, returned home with the rank of Colonel.

It did not surprise him to find that his brother's Irish patriotism was on the wane. He had never supposed that it would be of lasting quality. Nor was he greatly disturbed to hear that George was now waging war against clerical influences in Irish life. After all, George had long ago abandoned any practice of religion. But the Colonel was angry as well as distressed when his brother sought formal admission into the Irish Protestant community (The Church of Ireland), on the ground that Catholicism had produced no book of importance since the Reformation. In Ireland religions are inherited, and often inseparable from political beliefs, Catholicism for many Nationalists being a sort of trench against Buckingham Palace and Downing Street. As Stephen MacKenna, the only other 'convert' of George Moore's period, said, Irish Catholics would all far rather that one of their number should

lapse into a mere awful free thinker than become attached to the other organized religion, it is never supposed that one changes not of a lamentable devilry and deliberate malice but out of a stern conviction. In George Moore's case the malice and devilry were more apparent than the stern conviction; but he did desire passionately to separate from his Irish Catholic associations, and conversion to the 'Ascendancy' Church seemed the best way of doing this.

To the Colonel, it seemed like a disloyalty, a going over to the enemy. He had built up in his mind a picture of ancestors, driven from their homes by the English in past years, by greed of land and religious persecution, and sharing in the indescribable sufferings of Catholic Ireland. The brothers argued about the family tradition; George put up the best case he could by pointing to the original Protestantism of the Moores, to the possibility that their great grandfather had joined the Catholic Church in the first instance to save his Spanish business from confiscation, and to the very liberal tone of their grandfather's writings. The Colonel replied to him that really nothing was known about their great-grandfather's religion, except that he had made a private chapel at Moore Hall, and had kept a chaplain. Could it be denied that their father went to Mass, and that he had been a champion of the Catholic cause? 'Our patriotism doesn't amount to so much', George retorted, 'father and the rebel of '98; grandfather regarded himself as an Englishman,

and in any case you must admit that the best Irish Nationalists have been Protestants.'

'Your sneers at my religion,' he wrote in one letter, 'seem to be singularly ill-considered. It is impossible to deny that Edward VII compares favourably with shall we say Alexander VI, or would you prefer Julien II, and there are murderers who have been bishops of Rome. But your bigotry enables you to overlook these facts and likewise the history of the Church of Rome for the last 1000 years. Rome has always aimed at temporal sovereignty. You think it strange that I should accept a prayer book from the rector and you forget that those who died for Ireland in the past were not Catholics. . . .'

That the brothers were not seriously at quarrel is shown by the fact that Moore Hall was still at the Colonel's disposal; George offered too, at about this time, to pay for Rory's schooling and the boy was presently sent to Downside.

The religion of their mother's family, the Blakes, admitted no argument. The last of their uncles, Llewelyn Blake, had lately put monks into Ballinfad and taken monks to live with him in Cloughballymon, where he died, worth £60,000. All his money was left to the monks, and both homes to African Missions.[1] When the Colonel deplored the passing of these

[1] By instructions from Rome the will was modified in favour of some of the younger Blakes.

estates to religious orders, his brother replied that it was ridiculous to expect a Catholic to let relations come before his soul.

The Colonel was not yet on the retired list; after his return from the Boer War, he remained four more years in the Army, his regiment being stationed for the greater part of this time at Mullingar. The family continued in frequent residence at Moore Hall, and he was there himself whenever his military duty permitted. A good deal of his correspondence with George had to do with business; the house was in need of repair, and the question was raised whether all the Moore lands in Mayo other than Moore Hall should not be sold under the Land Act. The Scottish Insurance Company's mortgage on the Ballintubber property had never been completely paid off, and remained a constant worry, for the Company might foreclose if a bad year for rents should come. The interest from it was higher than could be got in the Funds. George did not altogether approve of the idea that Julian should purchase £500 worth of this mortgage; but he was willing to give way on the point. He would not hear, however, of his sister making any alterations in her investments. 'I do beg of you', he wrote to the Colonel, 'not to consent. This is my earnest advice to you. Julian speaks of her having £500 in the Funds. Surely Nina has £2000 in the Funds. I gave her £1200. Has that money been spent? The very thought of these hideous follies irritates me beyond measure. . . .'

A *postscriptum* about the wall-papers was added:

'I think a nice green for the passages. The colour for the woodwork is very difficult to decide, but white would look very pretty. I'd like those horrible plate glass windows in the dining-room and drawing-room to be taken away, and the old-fashioned small panes to be put in their places. Plate glass is one of the ugliest things from a century of ugly things, but I don't think I shall spend any more money.'

Nothing was done about the removal of the plate glass; neither brother then knew that the original beautiful little eighteenth-century panes, now become so valuable, were stored in the cellar.

In the end, the renovations cost George nearly £800. This troubled him; and, one day, when his brother was up in Dublin he remarked casually: 'I'd like to be quit of all the bother for £500 a year assured, I'd transfer everything to you, Moore Hall, the rents, everything.' It is a pity that the Colonel did not clinch the bargain, which would have worked out at the last most favourably for him.

Negotiations were then begun for a sale under the Wyndham Land Act, which gave owners better terms than they could hitherto have expected. Unfortunately misunderstandings and hesitancies, as between Ruttledge, George and the Colonel supervened; the opportunity passed by, and the Liberals coming into power, agitation was renewed in Ireland, and

pressure put by the Nationalist party upon the Government to revive the Wyndham legislation in a manner hostile to the interests of the landlords. At the same time, the Gaelic League took on a new lease of life; but it was now evident that the force behind the movement was not love of the language itself but the desire of separation from England.

'My dear Maurice,' wrote George, whose politics were becoming true-blue Conservative, 'Nothing could be more serious but you see I foresaw a disaster of this kind and I don't think anything can be done to avert what has to happen. The gift of prevision is a misfortune for it does not enable you to steer a better course. Despite my vision I spent £600 or was it £800 on Moore Hall and house; nobody will ever live in it — you will live in it for a while no doubt but do you imagine your children will live in it?

'If you will send me a letter on the subject of the cattle trade I'll send it to *The Times*. You will write it better than I can and you will write it more easily. I know nothing about the subject. Russell says that all the Dairy business will be brought to ruin for the Dairy men depend on the sale of the calves for their profits. Do send me the letter. Affectionately yours, George Moore.'

These were the closing days of the great estates, the end of a colourful chapter in Irish history. The signs were clear even to the boyish eyes of Rory and Toby.

The Lamberts and many of the Brownes had gone. Newlands was sold, and the old home of the Ruttledges, Cornfield, stood empty; the masonry of many mansions had been distributed. On Sundays when the Moores drove to the chapel at Carnucan, the people still doffed their hats, and met with a grave response; but it was obvious that the feeling of old days was lacking. There were few outrages. A 'deputation' once came to Moore Hall, and old Bridget dispersed it with a few mordant phrases in Irish and in English. But the peasant now knew that he would soon get rid of landlords — and cheaply.

Everyone, except the Colonel, knew that Ireland was about to revert to peasantry, and George became more and more convinced of the vanity of keeping up Moore Hall as a gentleman's house. Optimism was all very well; but it must not be allowed to involve them all in bankruptcy. And now the Colonel was talking about the revival of rural industries! Truly in their childhood, looms had hummed in the village street, housewives had spun at cottage doors, and there was even a brewhouse at Moore Hall; but it was not possible to recover the past. On his side the Colonel felt that he should be given credit for many useful and inexpensive improvements on the property. In response to local land-hunger he had surrendered part of his father's race-course, a mile of pleasant grassland, to conacre, and settled a few more tenants on the outlying portion of the demesne. As all this showed a

profit on the estate accounts, he began to resent constant prods and thrusts from Ely Place, such as this:

'When you told me that the water supply at Moore Hall cost £100 I told you that any expenses at Moore Hall must cease. I don't want to speculate in saw mills, I speculate in literature. I'll give you £40 for your saw mills or any other project that takes your fancy but my expenses at Moore Hall must cease — there was a baronet in Galway who started saw mills and lost a great deal of money. . . .'

Then came the incident of an offensive allusion to 'Papists' which George made in the presence of one of the Colonel's sons in a Dublin drawing-room.

Still on the whole the years at Moore Hall were happy ones. Having retired from the army the Colonel was able to give his whole heart to the national movement, as he had so long wished to do. A constant stream of patriotic notabilities now poured into Moore Hall for conference; only they came openly, not as in George Henry's day, disguised. What plots and counterplots were hatched behind the closed door of the great library, his family never knew; but it is certain that the aim was to embarrass the Government. The eldest boy, Rory, felt then, as he feels now, that his father's fine enthusiasm was being used by more selfish men for their own advantage. But the Colonel never seemed to realize this. His was the pure patriotism, the inherent nobility that labours without

thought of reward for what it conceives to be the good cause.

One year Dr. Douglas Hyde, President of the Gaelic League, was invited, and the boys were told that a really great person called *An Craibhoin Aibhin* (The Little Branch) was coming. If they would but attend to what he said they would no doubt be inspired to pursue their Gaelic studies with vigour. The quiet-spoken amiable little man no doubt gave them good advice. George, who respected a poet and a scholar, was glad that Dr. Hyde should be made welcome at Moore Hall. 'Ask Hyde if he ever received my letter,' his next letter to his brother ran. 'He has not replied to it. I wrote to him "your talent is mediocre and the sublime things you write you owe to the language like Shakespeare and the Elizabethans". This is my explanation of his beautiful poems and the explanation it pleases me to adopt, it is the most interesting, and he will not mind my attributing his genius to the language.'

All George Henry Moore's children were now well on into middle age. His had been a healthy and temperate family. Augustus, the third brother, was the first to go, and his death in London was sudden, following an operation. *The Times* published a short notice of his career:

> He was the youngest son of Mr. George Henry Moore, of Moore Hall, Ballyglass, County Mayo,

where he was born in 1856, and came of an old Irish and Roman Catholic family long settled in the west of Ireland. His father who was member of Parliament for Mayo in the 'sixties and 'seventies, was noted for his advanced Nationalist views, and was High Sheriff of Mayo in 1867, the year of the Fenian insurrection. His brother, Colonel Maurice Moore, who now lives at Moore Hall, commanded the 1st Battalion of the Connaught Rangers in the South African War. The eldest brother is Mr. George Moore, the novelist.

For 30 years Mr. Augustus Moore was a popular writer of stories and verse, and contributed frequently to *Punch* and the *World*. At one time he was editor and afterwards proprietor of the *Hawk*. It was a reference in this journal to Mr. Godwin, the first husband of Mrs. James McNeill Whistler, that led in 1890 to the quarrel with the artist at Drury Lane.

At this time Mr. Moore was literary adviser to Sir Augustus Harris, the manager of Drury Lane; and he also acted for a time as stage manager for Mr. Wilson Barrett. He wrote a good deal for the stage. *Les Cloches de Corneville*, which he produced in collaboration with his brother, Mr. George Moore, was perhaps his best known 'book', and he was also the author of the *Giddy Goat*, founded on a popular French farcical play, which was produced at Terry's Theatre in August, 1901.

He was married to a daughter of the late Sir John Monckton, Town Clerk of the City of London, and had issue two sons, of whom one is dead.

'Old Roman Catholic family', was rather hard on George! Maurice and Julian represented the family at the funeral; George did not cross to London, although he had been in recent years on very cordial terms with Augustus. Julian always came to the funerals of relations; otherwise he was seldom seen. A relation called at his lodgings, he was made welcome and given tea, and parted from with such a show of friendliness that he was surprised that Julian did not return to supper, as he had said he would, on the following Sunday. George explained this by pride, but it is possible that Julian wanted to guard himself from being involved in family quarrels.

About the time that Augustus died, a new Land Purchase Bill, the work of Augustine Birrell, came into operation. The measure was a bad one, but bad as it was, it seemed best to take advantage of it, lest worse should happen. The sale of the Moore properties under this Bill was what brought George to Moore Hall in 1911; but he also wished to refresh his memory of the Lake before writing the close of his three-volumed work, *Ave*, *Salve*, *Vale*. He was leaving Ireland as soon as the first volume was ready; indeed he had already made arrangements for the disposal of the lease of his house in Ely Place.

He stayed at Moore Hall longer than was originally expected. His nephews were on holidays at the time — Rory from Downside, and Toby from a school in Wexford. Their uncle inquired about their education,

and when he heard that both were at Catholic schools he was greatly distressed. He said that it was terrible for him to think that the money he had allowed to be taken from the estate accounts for Rory's education should have been paid to priests. If he was to continue his assistance, and make Rory his heir, the boy, he said, must be brought up as a Protestant. The Colonel characterized the proposal as infamous. One evening Reilly, the new steward, saw the brothers walking up the lawn, on their return from a walk. In his bowler hat and town suit, beside the gaitered Colonel, George looked like the family solicitor come up to advise, or expostulate. The Colonel's face was flushed, and George's gestures were deprecatory. Reilly knew that an end had come.

The boys themselves found their uncle very interesting, as his characteristics were so conflicting and different from anything they had yet encountered. 'Master Rory, Master George is a quare man, a very quare', was all that they could get from old Alec. But George was friendly enough with the boys, and even took them on excursions. Once he rowed with them to Castle Island, taking his turn with the oars. He loitered for so long a time about the castle that the boys grew impatient; he seemed lost in meditation. Had he a premonition, Rory has since asked himself, that this would be his final resting place?

There were long conferences between him, Tom Ruttledge and the Colonel, in the course of which it

appeared that he was very doubtful about selling under the Land Act at all! In fact, he seemed suddenly reluctant to part with any portion of the estates. It was partially mere stubbornness, partially a desire to retain some illusion of the Grand Seigneur. Dreams and reality conflicted in him as in his brother, only he was more aware of the conflict. In the end, it was decided, first, that Ballintubber and the outlying lands of Moore Hall should be sold, and secondly, that the Colonel should leave Ireland and complete the education of the family in Belgium.

CHAPTER XXI

THE BROTHERS SEPARATE

'On a grey windless misty morning in February the train took me to Kingstown; and I had always looked forward to leaving Ireland in May, seeking the words of a last farewell or murmuring with Catullus when he journeys over land and sea to burn the body of his brother, fitting them to my circumstances by the change of a single word.

'*Atque in Perpetuum Mater, Ave-atque Vale.*'

With this paragraph George Moore concluded his apologia. They are the last words of the third volume of *Ave, Salve Vale* wherein he offered his explanation of his spiritual and temporal divorce from the God and creed of his forefathers.

An impossible race were the Irish, he explained, steeped irrevocably in medieval dogma and superstition which made them incapable of accepting, or indeed understanding, his mission as the Messiah of the mysterious voice that came to him on the Chelsea Road.

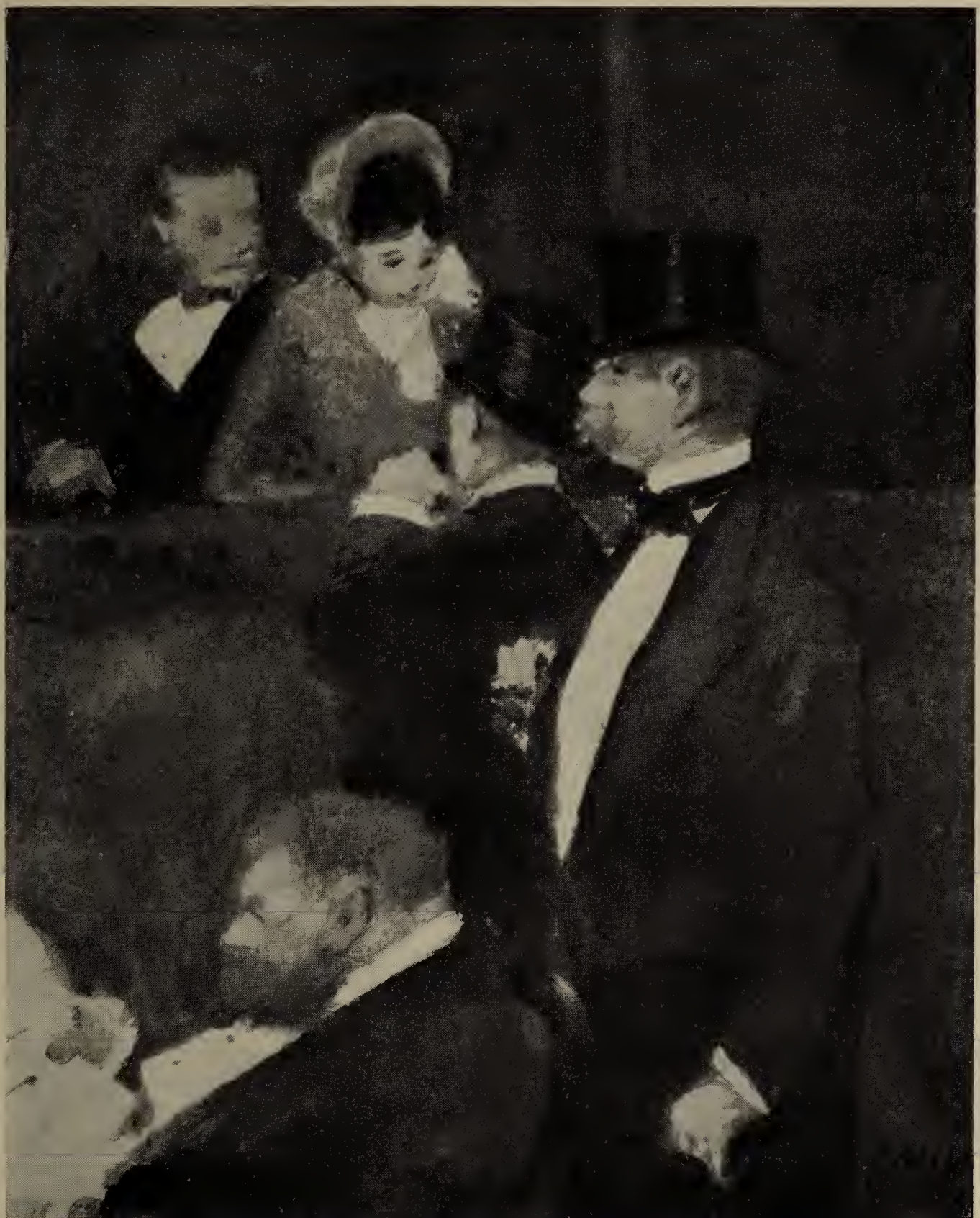
This was his ultimate decision, and the somewhat theatrical renunciation was only the characteristic gesture of a man whose acts were ever prompted by impulse.

Ten more years of life remained for Moore Hall. During that time the Georgian mansion stood exactly as the Colonel had left it, the family furniture covered with dust sheets, and the pictures and books keeping their ancient places. Expenses on the grounds were reduced to a minimum, but the owner refused to countenance any attempt either to sell or let the house or lands. The outer portions of the estate were peopled with tenantry; but the woods, lawn, garden and demesne proper were preserved, and soon these few hundred acres were all there was remaining in George Moore's hands of the original estates of the Moores of Mayo.

Powers to force Irish landlords to sell to their tenants had not yet been employed; so that, at the time of the introduction of the Home Rule Bill in 1912, the transfer of land from landlord to tenant over Ireland was still incomplete. But it was certain that an Irish parliament when established would not only reduce the purchase price, but would resort to legal compulsion. Watching the course of events from his Ebury Street house in London, George Moore fell into a panic, and putting all sentimental considerations aside, he urged his agent and his brother to press onward and push application for the sale of all tenanted properties in the land-courts. In December 1912, he wrote to the Colonel that the Home Rule Bill was 'certain to pass the House of Commons very soon', and it was 'not at all certain that the Lords would not pass the Bill

despite the Liberal party'; therefore no time must be lost in settling with the Congested Districts Board, 'or we may lose everything'.

The House of Lords, according to George Moore's notion, would let the Home Rule Bill through, in order that the Liberal Government might be forced to face the reality of the Orange challenge to this measure. Were not the Ulster Protestants preparing to make Home Rule absolutely impossible, whatever a mechanical parliamentary majority might say. Action had already begun with the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant, the 200,000 signatories to which pledged themselves to use all means that might be necessary to resist Home Rule. The Covenanters who had been openly drilling, began openly to arm, and were aided and abetted by their Tory sympathizers in England. This put the Liberal Government in a fix; the Covenanters could be described as rebels, but they were rebels whose motive was loyalty to the British tradition and the British Crown. The position of Redmond, the Irish parliamentary leader, whose vote kept the Government in power, was also very difficult, since it would have been beneath the dignity of a Nationalist either to ask a British government to employ coercion in Ireland, or to admit that the Ulstermen differed not only in religion, but in race, mentality and culture generally from the rest of the inhabitants of the country, and required special treatment. He had therefore to take



GEORGE MOORE LEAVING THE OPERA

up the attitude that the resistance of Ulster to Home Rule was not a spontaneous movement, but originated in a plot of the English Tories to regain office by reviving Irish religious prejudices to the point of the menace of armed violence.

These Protestant Ulstermen regarded themselves as Irishmen, but as Irishmen of a superior breed. As Stephen Gwynn says (*History of Ireland*, 1923): 'Owing to Franchise Reform, Land Reform, and Local Government Reform, Protestant Ascendancy had disappeared everywhere, except in Ulster. In Ulster it remained as a fact of nature, because Protestants had a majority of the population.' Redmond could promise the Protestant Ulstermen toleration under Home Rule, but in a Dublin Parliament, elected by universal suffrage, Catholic ascendancy would have soon become 'a fact of nature'. In short the freedom demanded by both sides was devoid of all historical foundation, being based on abstract metaphysical principles of democratic rights, and bound, if conceded, to end in the manufacturing of two new governments for Ireland, the moral bankruptcy of Partition.

George Moore liked to write letters to the paper, as a relaxation from his serious authorship which drew him away from the common interests of men. He now appeared before the public, in a contribution to the *Daily Mail*, as a supporter of Ulster's claim to special treatment; he cited his own Irish experience as a proof

that 'Catholic and Protestant do not mix'. This angered his Nationalist brother. 'Don't mind George,' the Colonel said. 'He stands for nothing; what he says one day he contradicts the next. He stands for no set of opinions, no set of tastes, no set of prejudices even. The real object of his Irish expedition was to pose as the leader of a literary movement, and when the Gaelic League cold-shouldered him he revenged himself by abuse of Irish Catholics. Now he is posing as an Irish Protestant, anything to compel attention. His letters about Ireland have about as much importance as the interviews he gives to correspondents about street noises, or the letters he used to write in French — were they corrected by a Professor? — to the Irish newspapers about his fishmonger.'

Relations between the two brothers now suffered a further deterioration. The Colonel took great exception to the portrait of himself hung in the second volume of *Hail and Farewell*. It was indeed somewhat condescending. 'The Colonel', as depicted by George, embodied a conception of the romantic type of Catholic Celt, who remains aware of realities but will not relate them to his ideas and his acts. 'To what business is he going I often wonder, as I stand by the window watching him, remembering all the while how he had lain back in his arm-chair after breakfast, reading a book, his subconsciousness suggesting to him many different errands . . . As soon as I discovered my mistake I retraced my steps. Not so the Colonel. He knows at the

bottom of his heart that the Irish language cannot be revived, and it was irritating to be asked to change the hour of dinner for the sake of so futile a thing as the Coisde Gnotha. If he loves Ireland as well as he professes to why did he go into the English Army? . . . Was there behind his mind, far back in it, some little flickering thought that if Ireland rose against English dominion he would be able to bring to the service of his country the tactics he had learnt in the enemy's ranks? A sentiment of that kind would be very like him.'

The Colonel was in no mood for raillery, and protested. George said that he had shown the pages to Yeats who found in them nothing that should give offence. 'But how did Yeats like the pages you wrote about him,' the Colonel answered, 'and did you read these to him before they were printed?' The brothers finally agreed upon a truce for six months during which time religion and politics should not be mentioned between them. Since his departure from Moore Hall the Colonel had employed a part of his leisure in writing a biography of his father, entitled *An Irish Gentleman*; and as proof of his goodwill George Moore now travelled to Belgium to help the Colonel with the manuscript. He found that were it not for politics there would not be a dull page in the book, a left-handed compliment, as the greater part of his brother's endeavour had been to present George Henry Moore as a maker of Irish political history from 1846-70.

George thought their father had gone into parliament out of a spirit of adventure and curiosity: 'One's prejudices guide one's judgments,' . . . 'I am afraid this explanation of my father's reasons for going to the House of Commons will appear whimsical to those who, like my brother, take a normal view of our national assembly. The raiding of smoking-rooms and libraries is not very exciting, and the tea-shop hardly more so; it would be better for literature if the Whips could be represented as raiding Cytherea and dragging unwilling members out of siren arms, carrying them away to the House of Commons to save a division while arranging their neckties. The biographers of Lord Salisbury, Mr. Asquith, and Mr. Arthur Balfour will, during the course of their labours, sigh after a little sin. Not one of these three has ever called anyone out in a duel, nor brought a boat through the desert on the back of mules; nor have Mr. Winston Churchill and Mr. Lloyd George ever turned their heads to look at a naked Syrian girl. Oh no!'

A publisher, Mr. Werner Laurie, thought that the book would go well if George Moore contributed the preface in this spirit. As George Moore felt that the preface was a kindness to his brother, he was vexed when the latter began to criticize what he wished to say. 'The best thing in it, my dear Maurice,' he wrote, 'is the defence of dullness and that you don't like. Have you lost your sense of humour? Has irony no charm for you? The irony in the passage referred to

is not directed against you but Lord Morley and the biographers of Prime Ministers. I am a little weary of the perpetual controversy.'

By May 1913 the book was announced, and the Colonel came to London to choose the illustrations and see the book through the press. He chose a photograph of himself, as a Connaught Ranger, taken when he was about forty years old, for the frontispiece. George Moore looked in one afternoon at Werner Laurie's for a chat, and the next morning the Colonel in his lodgings in Beaufort Street found a letter in his brother's handwriting in his post.

'As it is impossible for me', the letter ran, 'to begin the preface before a week, I went to Werner Laurie to ask him if that would suit. He said perfectly, and showed me some of the illustrations. Among them I found a terrifying portrait of you — you in all your youth, the beauty . . . So now we know the light in which you wish people to see you. Lord have mercy upon us sinners! It will make you and the book rather silly. Why did you not get Walter Osborne's portrait photographed? There is no libeller like the lens. Thank Heavens! There are no portraits of me about! If yours must get in I will propose to Werner Laurie to print opposite to it one of Max Beerbohm's cartoons as a sort of make weight. . . .'

The Colonel was furious, and some time passed before he would consent to see his brother again, and

when they did meet an argument arose over some remarks about their father's last days which were to be found in the manuscript of the preface. A compromise was effected, or appeared to have been, and George Moore escaped to Paris where, however, a letter from the Colonel followed him: 'My dear Maurice,' went the reply, 'I regret I cannot make the alterations . . . I do not say that our father killed himself, merely that I like to think of him dying as an old Roman. That he died without the consolations of our holy religion is a fact, for I was there and got an explicit account of his death from Joseph Aplely. I told you these things before I wrote the preface . . . Above all do not write more solemn letters beginning, "The facts are these", sincerely yours George Moore.'

The preface ran to only about a dozen pages. Yet six hours were lost to George Moore's holiday in the completion of the final draft. Never had he undertaken a more troublesome commission, and as he made up the parcel he breathed a deep sigh of relief. He had taken out the sentence, 'I am glad my father died without the help of sacraments', because it was wrong — bad literature — to express this personal opinion, and he had also enclosed a note to his brother saying that he might let the book appear without any preface, if he so chose. The passage now ran:

> He died killed by his tenants, that is certain, he died of a broken heart. My brother gives a letter, which I should like to believe, points to suicide,

> for it would please me to think of my father dying like an old Roman. His valet told me that he was quite well the day before; when he came to call him in the morning he was breathing heavily, when he called again my father was dead; and this tragic death seems the legitimate end of a brave life, and in my brother's book he appears to me as wonderful as any character invented by Balzac or Turguenev.

The parcel reached the Colonel at a moment when he was starting for Ireland; he had just time to read it and leave it with Werner Laurie before catching his train. In Ireland he saw his sister, Mrs. Kilkelly, and some cousins, and spoke to them of what had happened. They begged of him to see that no uncertainty remained. Being without a copy of the preface, his impression of George's wording of the disputed passage gradually weakened; and it was in these circumstances that he sent to Werner Laurie a slip for insertion, informing readers of the book that what had been said about his father's death represented his brother's wishes and not the facts.

When George received his copy from Werner Laurie and saw what had been done, he wrote to the Colonel and angrily accused him of inserting the slip with a view to getting up a controversy: 'a controversy that will sell the book, and I cannot think of a more disgraceful proceeding and regret very much that I had anything to do with the book.'

The Colonel in a heated reply stated that he shared

his brother's regret. The slip, he maintained, was entirely unobjectionable. 'You say, which I should like to believe points to suicide, and I say your words must be taken as expressing your wishes. This is no reflection on him, and I must insist on a right to express my views. What was sure to provoke controversy was your original statement, and if controversy was disgraceful that was disgraceful.'

They continued their dispute by letter until the end of the summer. The Colonel who had gone back to Brussels, released his pent-up feelings of the injustices suffered at his brother's hands. He drew up a long list of George's 'unbrotherly acts' and included in it this item. 'A property was entailed on the owner's sons in order of age; none having more than a life interest. The owner died before the eldest came of age who by this accident became legally entitled to break the entail. He took the advantage of this to alter the succession to the disadvantage of his next brother's children. He did this in spite of a hundred promises to the contrary, and in spite of the five years labour his brother had spent on the estate.'

This was the first time that the question of George Moore's testamentary intentions had been raised between the brothers since the day at Moore Hall when the Colonel had been told that his sons must be brought up as Protestants if they were to expect anything from their uncle. Now, in his reply to the Colonel's attack, George said nothing further upon

this subject, but contented himself with an allusion to his generosities in the past. 'The last unbrotherly act I was guilty of was going through your MSS. line by line, spending hours upon it and days upon a preface.' As for Moore Hall, Ruttledge would see that the Colonel's belongings there would be kept for him till he returned to Ireland to set up another house for himself. Silence and separation, he agreed, had become the only modes of possible life. 'For the brother I once knew,' the Colonel had written, 'for that George I still feel the same affection; the same gratitude for many kind actions. But for the altogether different brother that has grown out of him since about the period of Augustus's death or a little before, and who has inflicted on me so many unkind and unbrotherly blows my feelings could not be the same.'

CHAPTER XXII

THE COLONEL ORGANIZES IRISH VOLUNTEERS

Soon after the unhappy events recorded in the last chapter Colonel Moore was sitting in his club in London, scanning a newspaper. His eye caught a small paragraph about a meeting which would be held in Dublin next day to consider the organization of Irish Volunteers. The idea was not new to his mind; he had often in years past considered how, and in what guise, such a body could be formed; and in his recent biography of his father he had published Moore's document of 1861, called 'First Ideas for Irish Volunteers'.

It was not necessary, however, to look far back for an excuse, and a model for such an enterprise. The Orangemen had lately taken the initiative on the other side, and the Government had permitted them to do openly what had always been prohibited among the Nationalists. Government interference against the Nationalists would now be very difficult unless similar proceedings were taken against the Orangemen, so that at the worst, a certain measure of success seemed certain. Surely, he had said to himself already, there must be strong reasons against such an obvious step, or it would have been proposed by Redmond, the Irish

leader, and that had made him pause while he was in Belgium. Now two minutes' consideration was hardly required; he put down the newspaper and without hesitation or consultation wired his adherence to the movement.

Any doubts if he had them were speedily laid at rest, when he received letters from John MacNeill, Vice-President of the Gaelic League, who had taken the first public step by inviting those who might be interested in the matter to write to him. He had long known MacNeill on the Gaelic League, and was delighted at the general principles he put forward, which were indeed in exact agreement with the ideals which had grown up in his own mind since he was a boy, and which were in consonance with the spirit of the Gaelic League, with which he had worked so long. They parted altogether with the narrow lines, and the class warfare to which he had never been inclined, and which had prevented him from entering public life. It seemed that at last opportunity had arisen for working for all Ireland, in a true national spirit, in an organization in which Protestants and Catholics, Landlords and Tenants, could work together, and which would show even Unionists that they could join with Nationalists for the common good of their country.

Two different and often conflicting objects were before the Colonel's eyes. The first and most urgent of these was the immediate checkmate of the Orangemen and the English Unionists. The second, and more

important, but not so pressing object was the establishment of a permanent force for the defence of Ireland and her liberties.

The Colonel's offer of his services was accepted by the Committee, upon which he found the poet, Pearse, at whose Irish school near Dublin Ulick had been for a short time. The Colonel admired the idealist youths of the Committee; but he feared that they were ignorant of military matters. However, in spite of impediments, he found that good arrangements had been made in Dublin; he chose his own county of Mayo for his first experiment as Inspector-General (to which he was appointed), knowing that there at least he would get a hearing. He spent Christmas 1913 with an old friend of the Moores and their neighbour, James Fitzgerald Kenny of Clogher House.

The work which he had now found was the work which he had always longed for and which he felt himself most fitted to do. He was very busy in the coming months. Now he was in London trying to persuade the Parliamentarians to come into the movement; now on pressing work in the Irish provinces, where he addressed meetings, formed committees, inspected parades, decided which units were, and which were not, qualified to elect delegates to the central body and so forth; now in his office in Dublin. All this work was done gratuitously; he did not receive a shilling for expenses, and he had all the while to maintain the expenses of a house in London for his family.

It was his opinion against idealists like Pearse that volunteers should not be too proud to accept aid from the Government. Even in his childhood he had felt instinctively that only force, or threat of force, could gain liberty for Ireland; but a long study of history had taught him that prudence and patience were the qualities most necessary to conspirators. He remembered that in 1782 Irish Volunteers had come into existence with the aid of Government, but once established had used their strength for a national end. The danger now was that the Government might proclaim all volunteers, both Unionist and Nationalist, and therefore, in order to assuage Government fears, he crossed to London for an interview with the Minister for War, Colonel Seely, with a proposal of forming an Irish 'Territorial' Force. As a youth when entering the British Army, he had had the thought of qualifying himself at some period to help his country; as time went on, the hope had seemed vain and childish; then suddenly when all such visions had almost vanished, the opportunity came, and he seized it.

Instructors were plentiful, and of excellent quality; the majority in Dublin were retired sergeants of the Dublin Fusiliers, but his own Connaught Rangers were represented; it was astonishing with what alacrity British ex-soldiers flocked into the Volunteers, ready to work free of cost for their country. Had he not always held that there were no better nationalists than

the Irish in the rank and file of the British Army? A sour puritanical sort of Irish patriotism turns its face aside from those deeds of valour which have won for Irish regiments a glorious place in British military history. But this was not the Colonel's temper. Never, whatever his brother might say, had he been ashamed or sorry that he had 'gone for a soldier'.

What did surprise and distress him was the attitude of the officer class towards events in Ireland. After thirty years in the British Army he of course knew very well that all officers were inclined to Toryism; but politics were not much discussed in his time, and if he had often been chaffingly called a Fenian, that had never interfered with his promotion. But now meeting old friends in military clubs he was horrified to find that they were all talking of the iniquity of handing over Ulster Protestants to the government of Irish rebel Papists. 'To me, an old officer', he has since written, 'trained in the school of discipline, it seemed as sudden, as strange, and as revolutionary as the change of the soldiers of the Tzar to the ranks of the Bolshevists.' The Colonel's astonishment and distress were genuine; and yet is it so strange after all that the preference of English officers should have been extended to that part of Ireland which prided itself on its loyalty to the King and the British flag, rather than to the Nationalists, however 'constitutional', who were working towards separation.

Redmond and the parliamentarians, as strict Con-

stitutionalists, were at first hostile to volunteers, although unaware (as the Colonel also was) that the Committee was permeated by the influence of the secret society, the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The method of the Brotherhood, says Mr. R. M. Fox (*Green Banners*), was to work through 'non-suspect' organizations and people. The Colonel sought out Redmond in London, with the approval of the Committee, to urge him to give a favourable sign. A declaration of sympathy with Ulster made by a number of British officers at the Curragh at this time had shown how far resistance to an Act of Parliament might go. Redmond's view was changing, or perhaps he now thought it better to meet the Volunteers while he could still impose his own terms. He greatly distrusted such men as Pearse and Sir Roger Casement and his distrust was reciprocated. On the other hand, he liked the Colonel, and received him in a friendly way. What he thought of the political sagacity of the emissary is not recorded; but at all events negotiations were opened between the Party and the Volunteers, Redmond asking for and obtaining the right to nominate a majority of his own followers on the Committee. Just then the Ulstermen brought off a wonderful gun-running coup; excitement ran high, and Redmond called upon nationalist youth to show a like military spirit. There was an answer of at least 15,000 recruits for many weeks. 'The result was an amazingly upward leap . . . On June 15th 1914 a question

brought out that they were estimated at 80,000 against 84,000 of the Ulster force . . . By June 9th at 132,000, of whom nearly 40,000 were army reservists' (Stephen Gwynn, *Last Years of John Redmond*).

Things stood thus when the European War broke out. Redmond then succeeded in getting his Home Rule Bill put on the Statute Book; but the operation of the Act was suspended until the end of the war in deference to the Ulstermen. The latter recruited in large numbers for service in France. Redmond's sympathies being also engaged with the Allies, he called upon Nationalist Ireland to support the prosecution of the war, and at a parade of the Irish Volunteers on September 20th, 1914, he expressed a hope that their valour would prove itself abroad, as well as in defence of the shores of Ireland against a foreign invader, and spoke of a union of North and South to be cemented on the fields of Flanders! The Colonel, who was present at the parade, thought the speech impolitic; in fact (in a letter which miscarried) he had warned Redmond not to speak of recruiting. The Colonel was not opposed to the Irish going to France; but he thought that the Volunteers as such should only be used to enforce a demand for national liberties; also he felt sure that the effect of Redmond's speech would be to provoke dissension on the Committee.

In effect, twenty out of the twenty-seven original promoters of the movement denounced Redmond's

action; most of the twenty were among the leaders of Easter Week rebellion of 1916. In reply Redmond called a meeting of his supporters, and formed the *National* Volunteers, who were estimated to number 150,000 as against their 10,000 rivals, who retained the title of *Irish* Volunteers.

Colonel Moore could appreciate the point of view of the dissentients; and his friends were mostly of their party. But he decided to stay with the Redmondites, and he wrote to the papers that all thoughtful men would acknowledge that the Irish Volunteers must come under the control of the Irish Government once Home Rule was established, and this being so, Redmond was the nearest approach now to be found for such an authority. He continued therefore for many months as Inspector-General of the National Volunteers who except in Dublin were in a great majority; he worked out schemes for turning them into a well-equipped army which would be predominant in Ireland at the end of the war. He never made recruiting speeches. The Commander of the 16th Irish division in France said to him: 'If you would make recruiting speeches we could get thousands of men for France.' The Colonel replied that his business was to arm the Irish people, not to supply the British Army with recruits. Redmond, on the other hand, was chiefly interested in using the Volunteers as a reservoir for the effort, a very gallant one, to enlist Irish manhood as a separate unit under the Irish flag in France. But the

War Office, suspicious, would not help, and when the effort failed, the National Volunteers quickly became objects of derision and contempt. They had no reason for existence that anyone could see, whereas the intentions of the Irish Volunteers, who wished to make England's difficulty Ireland's opportunity, were plain to all.

The Colonel's own sons were going to fight in France, and Nationalists in large numbers were joining the British Army. The old soldiers and reservists, drill masters, on whom the National Volunteers depended for their efficiency, were being called to rejoin their regiments. Taking all the circumstances into consideration the Colonel resigned his position as Inspector-General and himself rejoined the British Army, as a Brigadier; he was sent to a fort in the south of Ireland.

While he was still in the south news came of the Easter Week rising and of its strong suppression by General Maxwell. The Colonel did not hesitate to express his fierce indignation at the execution of Pearse and thirteen of the other leaders of the Irish Volunteers; he at once told his superior officer that he would be obliged to resign his commission. 'I suppose you don't mind,' he said, 'I must return to Dublin to do my duty to Ireland.' The superior officer did not mind, and the Colonel returned to Dublin where all were now mourning over the fate of the men of Easter Week. He realized that he had

taken a false step which he must amend. His position was difficult. He was not as parliamentary as the Parliamentarians nor as extreme as extremists. He headed the appeal for the life of Sir Roger Casement, and went to the Castle by request to intercede for a house in Parnell Square which was being used as a Military School for the Volunteers.

No one seemed to want Home Rule any longer; and the Republic of Pearse and of the martyrs was the cry of the new agitation which took the name of Sinn Fein and soon swept Redmond and his party out of existence.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE COLONEL ASSISTS IN THE FOUNDATION OF THE IRISH FREE STATE

Both George Moore and his brother, the two elder sons of G. H. Moore, were now in their sixties, and had therefore passed the span of life allotted to their distinguished father, who had done so many things so well. But the one like the other — sharply though their lives diverged — could feel that only now had he completely found himself and reached the height of his powers. Both were happy in cherishing an ideal, the one of art, the other of country. Each was destined to become a Grand Old Man, George in English Literature, Maurice in Irish National Politics.

At the beginning of the European War, George Moore had sat down in the first floor front room of his modest house in Ebury Street to polish the phrases of his biblical romance, *The Brook Kerith.* He was determined upon a deliberate isolation of himself from his fellow-writers. 'My books', he said, 'shall not be sent round with the milk.' All that he henceforth published, *A Story Teller's Holiday*, *Héloïse and Abélard*, *Ulick and Soracha*, *Aphrodite in Aulis*, was published at his own cost, though not unprofitably, in beautifully prepared editions, for a select public.

Only once in these years did he see Moore Hall, other than with his mind's eye. He was in Ireland on a holiday and had gone to Westport for a few days to stay with Tom Ruttledge, his agent and his old friend, and to collect for *A Story Teller's Holiday* Irish folklore which had escaped the attention of the professional collector. At Moore Hall he noticed that the out-buildings needed repair and raspberries had taken possession of his mother's old flower garden; but avenue and lawn were tidy, and the house still wore the air of the seat of an estated gentleman. Time had not yet had leisure to do its work. And on the train to Dublin he mused in this wise:

> Outside of the circle of your own life you are unconcerned with the fate of Moore Hall, my agent's ghost insisted as the train passed by Maynooth, and I answered to the ghost: That is not so, for I would prolong the life of Moore Hall beyond my life if it were possible. What is Moore Hall but one of the thousands of other houses built in the eighteenth century, he replied. The Nineveh into which Jonah marched for three days before he began to preach passed away so rapidly that the shepherds who fed their flocks among the ruins could not tell Xenophon the name of the bygone city. Why then, said the ghostly voice, should you trouble about Moore Hall? nobody will live there again. It is true I answered him, time overtakes the most enduring monuments, but one continues to build, for we are created with that intention, and every day we strain against

> death. Why then should it be very foolish of me to dream of Moore Hall as a hostel for parsons and curates when I am among the gone? The Irish church is very dear to me and Moore Hall might serve as a token of my admiration of a Protestantism that has given Ireland all our great men and our Anglo-Irish literature.

The Easter Week rising had just been put down, and while passing through Dublin, some friends took him to see the bombarded parts of the city. This tour of inspection found a mention later in *A Story Teller's Holiday*:

> But are there no ruins in Sackville Street, I said, and he told me the finest were to be seen in Sackville Street, adding that the oven changes many an ugly carcass into a sweet smelling roast. Many of the buildings, the Custom House and the Post Office, appeared at first sight uninjured, but at second sight it was plain they were but empty shells. I shall have, I said, to wait for the sunrise to see these ruins. At present they are but phantoms, a city that has passed away, shapeless mounds that might be of Babylon. I shall have to wait for another time for some traces of Dublin to appear, ruined portico and broken portico. But martial law still prevails, I continued, and arrest, though it lasts but a minute, is unpleasant. I will adjourn to the office of the *Irish Times* and write paragraphs . . .

It would have been 'bad literature' to intrude a political opinion into his book. But he had been moved to indignation by what he regarded as a stab in

England's back in her hour of need. Art might carry him beyond this fleeting world; but he could not but brood sometimes upon the troubled times, and it must have annoyed him to hear, as no doubt he did hear while in Dublin, that his brother was going about protesting against the executions and the round-up of rebels. How like Maurice! Did he think that Pearse and Connolly should have been given a prize for good conduct?

That he was now determined that the breach with his brother should be irrevocable is certain. In Ruttledge's company at Westport he had spoken very harshly on the subject of the money which had been paid from the estate for the education of his nephew Rory at the Catholic School of Downside. His own reputation for sincerity was, he said, thereby greatly damaged, as he had so often published abroad his strong objection to Catholic schools, priests and monks. Moreover, there came out at this time a little book on himself; the frivolous tone of which he fiercely resented. It was reported that the Colonel had inspired the book; he only contributed some incidents. The brothers cut each other on the stairs of Plunkett House (at the top of which worked the lady who had written the monograph), and George before leaving Ireland wrote to the steward at Moore Hall to say that his brother should never again be admitted within the gates, an order which Reilly had not the heart to obey when next the Colonel stopped in to see how the old place was looking.

The Colonel's mind now dwelt on other matters than the quarrel with his brother. Besides being passionately preoccupied with Irish events he suffered anxiety for his two sons in the fighting line in France, Rory, who had started life on a ranch in Wyoming, having joined the American Expeditionary Force, and Ulick being with the 6th Connaught Rangers. Peter, the son of Augustus, and Mrs. Kilkelly's son, were also at the war; so that all four grandsons of the Irish patriot George Henry Moore were engaged in England's battle. It may be that the Colonel repeated to himself Sarsfield's famous cry: 'Oh that all this blood might be shed for Ireland!'

After the German break through in 1918, Ulick was reported missing. Later the Colonel ascertained the facts of his son's gallant end, and put them down as follows:

> The survivors of the 6th Connaught Rangers from the counter-attack on Rousay Wood were driven back to St. Emillie, with the St. Emillie Rousay Road to the right, and a railway embankment running towards Epély on the left. The general line was called the Brown Line, and it was held easily on the 21st after which the Dublin Regiment was ordered to retire. About 5 o'clock there were in the trench only the remains of two companies, 6th Connaught Rangers, under Captain Roussel, Ulick, and two or three young officers. On the morning of the 22nd March, St. Emillie (held by the Hampshire Regiment) was captured by the

> Germans, at about 6 a.m., and as all the English troops in the vicinity had retired, the isolation of the companies (about 100 men) was complete. Their ammunition was exhausted by mid-day, and they tried to fight their way through St. Emillie, but failed. The attack was very heavy from all sides and men were falling. Someone then suggested getting out of the trench in spite of the murderous fire and taking the chance across the open. Ulick urged three or four others to attempt it. They had scarcely got over the parapet when they all went down.

By the end of the war the Colonel and his wife were settled in a secluded terrace of a Dublin suburb in an old house, with an apple orchard at the back, where Anthony Trollope had once lived, and, more lately, Stephen MacKenna, a famous scholar in Greek and in Gaelic. They were alone; Rory, demobilized, had returned to Wyoming. Two young British officers came once and searched the house; the Colonel was taken prisoner into Dublin, where he was courteously detained for a few hours. In the elections of the autumn of 1918, of the 105 candidates returned, 73 called themselves Republicans; these set up a Parliament of their own in defiance of Westminster, the Dáil, with Mr. de Valera, a survivor of Easter Week 1916, as President. 'Then,' says Mr. Edmund Curtis (*A History of Ireland*) 'began a curious state of things in which there were two governments in Ireland and in which the people often preferred the Sinn Fein courts to the

established courts. But while civil Sinn Fein negotiated in public, some 2000 militants of the Irish Republican Army in small bands took to the gun, and the seizure of government buildings and sporadic deeds of bloodshed . . . heralded a growing period of war . . . The results . . . were a dreary and horrible record of reprisals and counter-reprisals, burnings, murders and outrages, not between armies, but between expert gun men on both sides.'

In this period the Colonel obtained permission to visit the devastated areas in France; he found where his son lay—the Germans had marked the grave with a cross.

A longer journey was to South Africa, as Irish Republican envoy to the statesmen in that Dominion, who were shortly to attend the Imperial Conference. Mr. de Valera and the Colonel had a secret meeting at the house of a third party before his departure. The Colonel asked for definite instructions. What proposals should be put before General Smuts? 'It is impossible to give definite instructions,' was the reply, 'but you have our complete confidence.'

Seventeen days later the Colonel reached Capetown, and began at once to get in touch with the leading men of all parties. The Dutch naturally showed him more favour than the English, who nicknamed him the 'Boer Colonel'; for the plea which he had made for the Boers while fighting for the British in the South African war was still remembered. But the *Cape Times*, an Imperialist paper, gave him the hospitality of its

columns, and the editor said of his memorandum on Irish nationhood: 'This is the most ingenuous argument we have ever read.' Nor did the Colonel omit to visit Mr. Malan, now Minister of Agriculture, and express his regret that he should have been the cause of his imprisonment during the Boer War. 'You reprinted my letter in the *Freeman's Journal*, attacking Kitchener,' the Colonel explained. 'That was a letter I wrote to my brother from South Africa, and which my brother, unknown to me, dictated to the *Freeman's Journal*.' General Smuts, who also granted the Colonel an interview, said he would speak to English ministers about Ireland, a promise which he redeemed by smoothing the negotiations for a Truce which were initiated in the winter of 1921-22 between the British Government and Sinn Fein.

When the Colonel found himself back in Dublin the Dáil was just meeting for its first public session, undisturbed by police or military. The members, however, soon divided into the two bitterly opposed camps of 'Free Staters' and 'Republicans', and the 'Treaty' which Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith brought back from London at once produced a threat of civil war in the twenty-six counties where it operated.

The advocates of the Treaty being in a majority drew up a new Constitution. This provided for a Senate, or upper House, and Colonel Moore was asked to accept a seat on this body as a mark of recognition for his services to the nation.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BURNING OF MOORE HALL

Of the sixty members of the first Senate of the Irish Free State, thirty were nominated by the President of the Executive Council (Mr. Cosgrave) and thirty were elected by the Lower House, or Dáil. The nominated group consisted of men, supposed to be detached from party politics, who because of special qualifications or attainments represented important aspects of the Nation's life. Colonel Moore found himself in a distinguished company which included a Lord Chancellor of the former regime, two Generals who had commanded Divisions during the War, leaders in Irish industry and the professions, various Peers and international celebrities like W. B. Yeats, Sir Horace Plunkett and Dr. Oliver Gogarty. The Colonel was not the only Nationalist of the old Guard in the group; but the method of nomination had been partly adopted in order to give the political minority a voice in the affairs of the new State, and his colleagues therefore were largely drawn from the Protestant and Loyalist minority of Southern Ireland.

Senators like deputies had to be afforded protection, and Ministers lived in a fortress. The new State hastily improvised an army to put down the dissentients; these

were led by de Valera and Childers, who adopted tactics very similar to those which had been employed against the British. There was fighting in Dublin and guerrilla warfare in the country; de Valera still claimed to be President of the All-Ireland Republic, originated three years earlier. In November 1922, Childers was captured and sentenced to death by a Free State Military Court; seventy-seven prisoners were shot in the week following; these were severer measures than had ever been taken against Irish rebellion by the British Government.

The Colonel felt uneasy, not for his own safety, but because he deplored the terrible division of men who had lately been fighting side by side for Irish freedom. The Treaty, admittedly, did not concede the full Republican claim; it contained many objectionable clauses, in particular a provision which separated six Counties of Ulster from the Free State. Old friends reproached him for supporting a 'puppet Government' which was 'carrying out the orders of English tyrants'. 'The man most hated by England', a lady wrote to him from the West, 'was Erskine Childers. When he was taken you must remember the joy of the English press. The Military Bill had prepared the way for his murder. It is said whether true or not, that Winston Churchill came over from London to hasten it . . . You a soldier, know that in War one of the duties of an Army is to destroy the enemies' communications. Ours did this to the best of their ability and means for

doing so. Yours had every weapon that England could give it. Also, you a soldier know that an Army in time of War commandeers what it wants; pays if it has money; does not if it has none. I know that the men of the 3rd Battalion, East Mayo Brigade, in this neighbourhood paid while the money lasted, then gave notes of promise on the public . . .'

Still, it was certain that a great majority of the Electorate had supported the Treaty, as a step at least towards better things, and the Colonel could not doubt that the Free State Government was a legitimate one, with a right to put down armed resistance to its authority.

The Jacobin element, always strong in the rural parts of Ireland, came to the front during the civil war; it proposed to drive the remaining gentry out of their demesnes and to break up the cattle ranches for division among the landless men. The Free State Government, although it had lately bought out all the remaining landlords very cheaply, was accused of supporting wealth and privilege. The property of members of the Dáil and Senate was attacked, and several houses of legislators were burned down, including Sir Horace Plunkett's, the rich philanthropist. As the brother of a Senator, George Moore began to fear for the safety of Moore Hall, his 'dreaming house'; really it was too bad that Maurice should insist in mixing in the absurd politics of Ireland. Long ago, before the troubles started, he had had a dream of a burning.

'No fear could ever disturb my grandfather,' he wrote two years later, 'that a Land Act would rob him of his dreaming house, or that it would be burned by Irish rebels. He was never roused from his bed by a fetch-light and flung, as I was, across the hearthrug, breaking my wrist in the fall. A Collis fracture, Tonks said it was, and he went away in search of a Surgeon, returning an hour later with one who set my wrist, and whilst setting it questioned me about the accident. But I could tell him no more than that I had broken my wrist in a dream; on seeing a flame shoot up I had plunged forward to quench a burning house. A burning house! they said, but what house? I answered that I did not know, nor was it till the burning of our houses began that I connected my dream with the burning of Moore Hall. . . .'

There was just time to have grandfather's portrait packed and brought to London. On February 1st 1923, George Moore in London and the Colonel in Dublin received identical telegrams from Reilly the steward: 'Moore Hall house burned down last night, nothing saved.'

Moore Hall, Ballyglass
Co. Mayo
6th February 1923

'Colonel & Mrs. Moore,

'Since wiring the Colonel on Thursday last I have been waiting in suspense for some sort of reply, but

none came until I got your letter this morning. When no reply came I was under the impression that Colonel Moore was coming and every day expected to see him. In the past I was always delighted when he came, but I am heartily glad that he has not thought of coming just now, as neither he nor you can have any idea of what the house looks like, there is absolutely nothing left but the walls, not a vestige of glass, timber or even plaster from the ground floor up, such wholesale destruction in a few hours is difficult to understand. I cannot add much to what you already know, only this. At 12.30 o'c. on Wednesday night armed men who were perfect strangers to me, called at the Lodge and demanded the Keys, I asked what for, and was told a column was going to be put up there for the night, I wanted to go over but would not be allowed, the road from Annie's-Bridge to Murphy's Lodge was patrolled by armed men. I was not in bed when the men called, and had just read of the burning of Palmerstown the beautiful home of Lord Mayo that I knew so well as I do Moore Hall. I suspected their visit might mean the same work, and I pointed out to the leader that the house was not Colonel Moore's property, but this had no effect. Of course I had no option but to sit in the Lodge all night, while I knew that the poor old house which I admired as much as if it was my own was being reduced to ashes. I was all the time hoping against hope that when the armed party cleared away I would be able to do something. At 4 o'c. I heard four

terrific explosions. At 5 o'c. I ventured out, it was then pitch dark and pouring rain, imagine my horror, when I got to the hill overlooking the garden, and saw the whole house one seething mass of flames, huge tongues of fire were shooting out of every door and window, clouds of sparks like snow flakes were being carried away by the wind which was *S.W.* I at once knew there was no hope even if I had help nothing could be done, a fire brigade would be powerless so firmly had the fire gripped the entire building, fearing that the outoffices would catch I let out all the live stock, and stood by to see the last, and felt as one does when standing by the open grave of a very dear friend. At six o'c. the roof went in with one huge crash and there was nothing left only smouldering ruins of my favourite charge on which I had spent twelve years jealous care. It sickens me when I think of it all.

I wrote the wires at 7 o'c. and short notes fearing that the wires would not go. I succeeded in getting them off from Claremorris, returned as quickly as possible, thinking that even then I would be able to save something from the Library. Assisted by John Quinn I got ladders up from the kitchen yard to the windows, but all to no purpose nothing living could enter.

James Reilly.'

Only one man employed in the vicinity came to assist Reilly. Others came when all was over; their

object seemed to be loot, but there was nothing to take except some vestments and the objects from the Altar in the priest's chapel. These the burning party conveyed to the lawn before beginning their work, as if to remind its owner at this last tragic moment of the fact in the history of his family which was most disagreeable to him.

Rory Moore in Wyoming had a letter from his father on the misfortune which had come over the family.

'It was certainly a very hard blow to bear', the Colonel wrote, 'to think of all the associations of one's youth, one's ancestors and one's children swept away and gone irrevocably for ever. One has to bear these afflictions as best one can; they have come to numbers of other people, not only in this country, but in other lands; princes and princesses in Russia are earning their bread as waiters and waitresses; just as the émigrés during the French Revolution had to do; and also as dozens of generations of Catholic Irishmen, driven from their homes during the last 700 years by the English, did in past times . . . I do not know what your Uncle will do, but I heard from a friend that he was greatly affected by the loss; he is a strange mixture and has always venerated the place, though he never wished to live there.'

George Moore put in a claim of £25,000 for the loss of his house and contents; he received about a third of

this sum. Better terms would have been forthcoming if he had consented to rebuild. But he was not in the mood to have any more transactions with his country. 'Since the burning of my house', he wrote to a friend, 'I don't think I shall ever be able to set foot in Ireland again.'

The Colonel's attitude was very different. Deeply as he felt it, the burning of Moore Hall changed nothing of his politics. Indeed it seems to have had the effect of enlarging his popular sympathies. The locality, he was persuaded, had had no hand in the destruction. This was the one big house in Mayo which all the people of Mayo had been brought up to love and to respect; a sort of historical monument which all must have reverenced on account of the many generations of Moores who had stood by the people, served them and suffered with them.

'Reilly,' he wrote again to his son, 'knows all the local people and hears conversations and comments and believes that none of them had anything to say to it. He says that though there is a feeling that it may bring them nearer the owning of the land, even for that they would not have wished it done. When one knows the absorbing desire of land by the Irish peasant that means a good deal.'

In the Senate he took up the cause of the peasant, by questioning the Financial Agreement of 1925 under which the Free State assumed responsibility for

collecting and handing to the British Government the annuities accruing under the Land Purchase Acts passed before the separation of the two countries. It was not suggested that the tenant purchasers should be entirely freed from these charges, but rather that the moneys should be retained by the Irish Government, and used for the benefit of 'the people'. Hitherto it had been considered that the Land Purchase Annuities were simple transactions between the tenant farmers and the capitalists who under the British Government's guarantee had advanced the means to buy out the Irish landlords. Whether paid or not — in fact they had been punctually paid — British Government was responsible for the interest charges and the sinking funds. The Colonel now argued that they were really part of the public debt of the United Kingdom, and pointed out that by Treaty the Free State had been absolved from all share of that debt.

His fellow Senators gave him little attention; but the Land Annuities question, as raised by him provided a rallying cry for certain elements in the country which wanted to upset the Cosgrave Administration, and set the old struggle with Britain afoot again, without Irishmen using guns against each other. This was the start of the constitutional anti-Free-State movement to which de Valera himself finally adhered by entering the Dáil and taking the Oath of Allegiance 'under duress'. 'I jumps in waving my £5 note,' wrote the impoverished Platonist, Stephen MacKenna. 'God

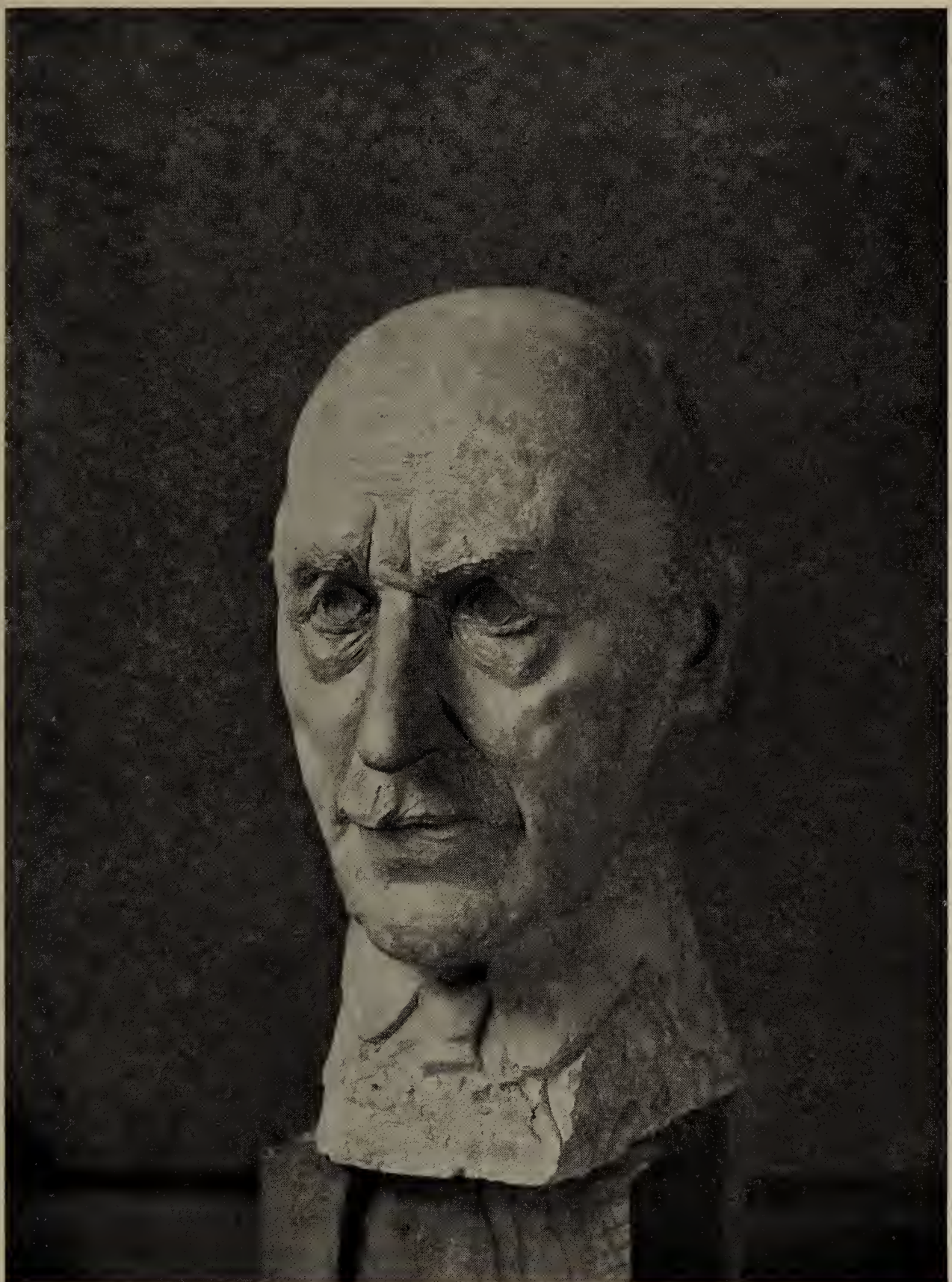
help us all; it is a foolish dream, but I have to dream it out for the rest of my life. I can't forget the poets and the dead, and I have the deepest, a kind of tender, feeling for Colonel Moore who seems to me a very noble type, honest and gentle and determined and dreamful, all the things a good man must be.'

Thus the Colonel continued in his political activities; but throughout them all there lurked never far below the surface of his mind the possibility of acquiring and rehabilitating the house of his forefathers. The human mind is a complex organism comprising a multitude of diverse cells, and inextricably mingled with the Colonel's patriotism, indeed the cradle of it, were the walls of Moore Hall, which now stood stark and ruined on the summit of the pleasant green hill of Muckloon. Kathleen na-Houlihan, the mistress of his heart, had come to him primarily in the shadow of those walls, and among the winding paths that traversed the ancient woods he had wandered with her, hand in hand, content to dream and plan in her seductive company.

George Moore had seen no object in keeping the Moore Hall demesne after the burning of the house and the decision not to rebuild; he had sold the land to the Congested Districts Board for what the Board would give, a trifle. The Colonel now entered into an arrangement with the Board by which he purchased about 300 acres of the Moore Hall townland and the

ruin at the price of £1300, payable by annuities of £64. The townland included lawn, avenue, bog, plantation, seven acres of islands on the lake, the bull park, Killen wood, the turlough, and the wood with the family tomb; also most of Derinhuish and a part of the arable land of Rochetown. To set against the rates and the annuity and to help towards the restoration of the house there was timber which he proposed to cut and sell; some rent might be obtained from Rochetown and the summer grazing land of the turlough. The whole was to be an inheritance for his son.

'With regard to the house', he wrote to Rory, 'its complete restoration is far beyond our means and would serve no useful purpose. If however a flat roof were put on it, and a light ceiling over the drawing-room floor, a quite good one-storied house would be the result; the two top stories would be cut off, left empty and the windows blocked with painted wood. By dividing the drawing-room, dining-room, and library into two each, there would be hall, sitting-room, dining-room (at back) and 5 bedrooms and a kitchen on the ground floor . . . Now I turn to your personal position. If this adventure is successful it will be all to the good. If it were to fail as a financial operation, as a last resort you could abandon it and hand it back to the Land Commission . . . Whatever decision you come to will not interfere with your work in America. You are on your way, perhaps you have



COLONEL MAURICE MOORE

nearly arrived at success, no one could think of leaving whether for Moore Hall or for a visit, till that has been fully established. It may not be for years, but there will always be the prospect before you and meantime we can see how the venture succeeds . . . You perhaps have read my pamphlet. The Movement is getting on well. I expect the present Ministers will go out of office on account of it.'

British Plunder and Irish Plunder was the title of the Colonel's pamphlet. The cry against the annuities had been adopted by Mr. de Valera's Fianna Fail party which promised when put in office to reduce taxes and rates by retaining in Ireland the four or five million annuities. The Colonel's star seemed to be in the ascendant, although a good deal yet remained to be done.

CHAPTER XXV

DISPERSAL OF THE MOORES

FORMER tenants, as we have seen, were already in possession of outlying lands on the Moore Hall estate. Landless men too had been brought in. The untenanted remainder purchased by the Colonel in 1929, being largely under trees, could produce very little, and yet the annuities, rates and taxes upon it amounted to over £100 a year. The Colonel hoped that by cutting £500 worth of timber (which would still leave a show of trees around the ruin), a beginning could be made towards providing for the flat roof and the light ceilings over the restored ground floor. Various contractors were consulted, and a prospective purchaser came to look at the woods, and to mark the trees suitable for the trade. So much, said the latter, would be unsuitable for felling that there was no fear but sufficient trees would be left to preserve a plantation round the house and avenue.

The Colonel waited for good news to reach him from his son (in whose name the place had been taken); but the next news from Wyoming was the American depression, and it was thought prudent to postpone the operations on the house.

Early in 1932, George Moore died, and when his will was read, such faint hope as may have existed

that he would offer posthumous assistance towards the Colonel's plans was dispelled. No doubt he must have heard of these plans, and his fortune, £80,000, would have been large enough to have provided for a modest restoration of the Moores at Moore Hall, had the bulk of it gone to a single heir. It was not to be; nine years earlier the Colonel had sought for a reconciliation but without effect. In his will George Moore made many bequests, but left nothing either to the Colonel or to the Colonel's son; the residuary estate was divided equally between Peter Moore, the son of his brother Augustus, and his sister Mrs. Kilkelly, subject to an annuity to the book-loving recluse of Kensington, Julian.

There were references to Ireland in an autobiographical fragment upon which he had been engaged when death came to him. Recalling his impressions of Dublin at the time, early in the 'eighties, when the Land League had forced him to leave Paris, he told how even then he had realized, noticing the many beautiful houses already turned into offices, that 'with the ascendancy gone everything beautiful in Ireland would soon be a recollection of past days never to return'. This showed that he had not changed his views since his gesture of a conversion to the Protestantism which 'has given Ireland all our great men and our Anglo-Irish literature'. But there was no mention in his will of religious belief, nor had any of those relatives to whom he left money abjured the Catholicism which they had inherited.

It was remembered by his sister that George Moore had once expressed his wish that his ashes should lie in one of the three islands of Lough Carra which belonged to the Moore Hall estate. These islands were now in the Colonel's possession, and it was he who arranged the details of the interment which took place on Castle Island, in the shadow of William Barrett the Welshman's Keep, within sight of Muckloon, a narrow arm of the lake separating the last George Moore from the tomb where his ancestors lay among the graceful larches of the Kiltoom shore.

All kinds of wild rumours went through the countryside about the urn — that it hadn't arrived at all, etc., but as a matter of fact, there had been no trouble about it and the railway took no more notice of the crate than if it had been a crate of eggs. No priest was expected to attend, but one friendly one came out several times as the grave was being prepared; he dared not come to the funeral for fear of offending his parish. Reilly put two new pennies under the urn for luck he said, but one wonders whether he had a vague memory of passage-money for the dead to be given Charon.

The sad duty over, the Colonel returned to his politics, rejoicing over the downfall of the Cosgrave Administration which had so steadily refused to listen to his admonitions on the land annuities and other questions. The election of 1932 brought de Valera into power on a programme which the Colonel could largely claim to have inspired. De Valera's first acts

were a refusal to forward the Annuities to the British Government and the abolition of the oath of allegiance hitherto obligatory on members of the Dáil and on Senators. It is true that Britain retaliated by imposing penal tariffs on the imported cattle of Irish farmers; but what did that matter? The nation was once again on the march to deliverance.

The three hundred acres owned by Colonel Moore could not have been greatly affected by the economic war, as it was called; very little at the best could have been made out of them. Wyoming, however, was now the victim of a serious drought of several years duration which decimated Rory's herds of beef cattle, and removed all hope of the young man being able to settle in Mayo during his father's lifetime. Nor was the Colonel's expectation fulfilled that after retaining the annuities at home the new Government would greatly reduce rates and taxes. To compensate the farmers for their losses in the economic war the Irish Government cut the annuities by a half; but rates and taxes rose at the same time to unprecedented heights, so what was gained on the swings was more than lost on the roundabouts. When Mr. de Valera abolished the Senate, the financial clouds grew still heavier; the Colonel lost his salary of £350 a year from this source.

Therefore, the plan for rebuilding Moore Hall was of necessity abandoned by common consent of father and son. In a final effort to preserve something of his old home, as at least a ruined monument of Irish

history, the Colonel approached the Forestry Board with a proposal that it should take over the demesne. Preliminary negotiations progressed favourably; but an end came with the decision of the Board that the size of the woods made their supervision impossible. The Colonel had been like a ship following a beacon only to pile up on the rocks.

Just after the papers were signed for the sale of the place to a timber cutter, the Colonel in the course of an interview with the President told him what had been done. 'But this is dreadful,' said Mr. de Valera, 'I can't bear to think of a fine old place like Moore Hall being torn down.' 'It is too late,' was the answer.

The Colonel labours still in the cause of his country. He is eighty-five and crippled with arthritis; but has nevertheless accepted a nomination to the new Senate which the Fianna Fail Government has set up in place of the old. He still studies all the newspapers and has lately published another book: a history in Irish of the Volunteers. He does not deplore the time and labour which he has devoted to his country, nor has he been dispirited by the results. He has seen three parts of Ireland achieve political independence, the supremacy of the Gaelic idea given official recognition everywhere, even in the old Viceregal Lodge, now the residence of Dr. Douglas Hyde, President of Eire, his leader in the early days when the language movement was in its infancy. There is the province of Ulster still to be

regained; but that it will be regained the Colonel is certain, even if by then his spirit shall have winged westward towards the setting sun. If he grieves at all, it is because the Moores will not share in the greatness and prosperity which he foresees for Ireland once her unity is achieved.

His sister has a house in the neighbouring Dublin suburb. Julian is always in West Kensington. Thus three children survive of the George Henry Moore, who was born a hundred and twenty years ago. Peter Moore lives in Surrey, and Rory struggles in Wyoming. Out in the heart of Mayo the air is soft with a quiet melancholy; the rain falls often, and there is ever a mist over the land. Admirers of George Moore's works when they travel in these parts, look in at Moore Hall to drop a tear over the woods which are fast falling under the axe. Reilly, who has brought up an Irish-speaking family on his holding by the gatehouse, shows them round. These extracts — with which I conclude my story of the Moores of Mayo — are from the diary of Una Jeffers, who was in Ireland in the summer of 1937.

July 23, 1937. On to Ballinrobe, then Moore Hall. Colonel Maurice Moore has instructed me to ask for James Reilly at gate house, former steward of the estate who would get a boat to take us out to Castle Island in Lough Carra. Two men were standing in the road. One was Reilly and the other Mr. O'Hare, present owner of Moore Hall.

Mr. O'Hare, a ruddy, burly Scotsman, with a steady blue eye joined in the conversation. When Reilly said he could not get a boat, even given time, O'Hare said he expected his own boat to arrive on Saturday and if we would return Sunday at 2 p.m. he would see that we got out there. If his boat hadn't come he would manage to borrow one. So we left on these terms. On to Westport and decided to climb Croaghpatrick the holy mountain some miles away . . . *July 25 1937.* Then on to Moore Hall, met Mr. O'Hare in the road. He said his boat hadn't come but he had arranged with Colonel Blake for his. Told us to meet him at Blake boat-house. Met James Reilly in front of his house in Sunday best. He thought no boat was available. We walked along lake shore one half mile to Blake boat-house. I picked a little nosegay of the flowers along the meadowy shore. Reilly told me the names — clover, a spray of hazel leaves, fairy flax, blue bells, white meadow-sweet and wild yellow meadow-sweet. Botanists find a very large number of flowers here of different varieties. Much fuss and got boat out, oars, etc. Reilly and Donnan rowed. They had to take the boat out and pull in for us at a point farther on where the water was not so shallow and the land sloped away steeply. We stood on a stone out a few feet and so into boat. The water was rippling. The wind blew up little flurries of waves. Toward Castle Island, he steered a crooked course as there are many big stones which come close to surface and would

easily tip the boat over. Pale clear green water. On shores and on bottom a white soapy deposit of lime. Irregular shore line. The boat was none too steady, oars cracked and oarlocks were just whittled out of wood. All the way across he talked about Moore and Moore Hall. He told how much the lake meant to Moore and developed the theme much as I did at the end of the talk I gave on George Moore in Carmel — the lake the theme (and symbol) that ran through his life (and books). Moore told him once he wanted to be cremated and Reilly must cast his ashes in the lake, but 'mind the wind that it doesn't blow the ashes back into the boat'. Moore had a violent temper but he helped his family and his friends constantly. . . .

Moore told him not to let Colonel Moore into the Hall after he had left in 1911 but Reilly said the Colonel came several times and he never told George. R. said 'That wasn't right for Mr. George to expect me, a worker on the place to tell the Colonel not to come in'. Said all the Moores had fine faces. We passed Kiltoom where Moore's father and mother and grandparents are buried. The last fifty yards we rowed through tall dry, sparse reeds which murmured huskily as we pushed through. Reilly pointed out a big stone he thought should have been hollowed out to receive the urn but Colonel Moore had thought that stone too near the water. The ashes are in an urn about twenty inches high. The urn is placed in a cavity two feet by two feet cut in the solid rock (a solid

one embedded in the ground fifty feet from water's edge). A pile of stones form a cairn five or six feet high above the cavity whose opening over the urn was cemented over. A granite cross two feet high is over a square granite plaque, cross has ivy leaves cut on it and the inscription. 'George Moore born 1852 Moore Hall, died London 1933.' Reilly complained that this did not balance. It should finish: 'died 1933 in London.' He also objected to A.E.'s inscription that Moore had deserted his country and friends for his art. 'He never deserted his friends.' Said it was a spiteful inscription.

After taking several pictures in very dim light we each placed a stone on the cairn and then went into a dense thicket one hundred feet away to inspect Castle Carra ruins, just a broken tower and much foundation thickly covered with vines: ivy and hazel growths. A man in gov't survey office in Dublin looked up this ruin for Reilly in records. In 1200 Castle Carra was already spoken of as complete ruins. Then our row back (Garth and Reilly at oars) through the reeds, always the racy speech with a Westport drawl from Reilly. Across the dim green water, the wind with us. He would look toward shore and say 'we must just toil a bit longer'. Talked of flowers, he was once a professional gardener. Said Moore spoke seldom of flowers in his writings. When Moore asked the name of a flower hated to have anyone give the Latin name . . . Spoke of Moore's great-grandfather,who had made his money in Alicante, as of one long well known.

The first day, Friday, we were here we went at O'Hare's invitation to the Hall again and spent more than an hour inspecting it. It was a grand place. Reilly said they used bombs as well as fire to destroy it. It had three good stories as well as a cellar story whose windows are well above ground. The cellars had many vaulted rooms: in one a cooking range half intact, many wine cellars with brick compartments (many broken bottles here) rooms with fireplaces in them and the corridor with signs still intact beside the bell-pulls. 'Dining-room, library, drawing-room, summer-room, morning-room, 2nd library, lower hall, etc.' Incidentally the queer copper loops on a staple (I took one home in 1929) were used to guide the wires along the walls. On the wall by main gate of Moore Hall is the date 1821. Either the wall or iron gate is thus much older than house. Many of the grates are still intact in the walls and one had a queer feeling looking up at them to see them look as if a fire were laid in them just ready for lighting — the work of the rooks who had brought in sticks, bits of moss and paper and arranged their nests in them secure and high out of reach. A fine brass shoe scraper is intact on the top step of the portico — how I wished I could have it. Reilly spoke of Yeats, Hone, Eglinton, Lady Gregory, Martyn, and other friends of Moore. (I promised to give Reilly Yeats's *Dramatis Personae*, was amused to find a few days later that not a copy of that or any other of his writings was to be found in his home town of Sligo.)

September 2, 1937 in Dublin. At Colonel Moore's, he was most hospitable . . . Talked of Moore Hall, George, his youth, service in India, Edward Martyn, Ballintubber Abbey, his son in Wyoming, politics, legends of County Mayo and neighbourhood of Moore Hall. Said George Moore told him long ago that he wished to be cremated and in the end it seemed a good solution of the difficulty of his burial. Not being a Catholic he could not be put in Kiltoom. Mrs. Moore said it was a great pity that the estate was sold, probably cattle would be turned into the grave yard. . . .

Colonel Moore showed us an old drawing of Moore Hall made one hundred years ago, pencil drawing used in his *An Irish Gentleman.* Also a heavy iron chest from Spain (about three by two feet) saved from the fire at Moore Hall. He had a key made to open it and found it full of deeds and family papers so badly charred that they could not be deciphered. I spoke of the many tiny iron doors (eight by ten inches) we saw up the outside walls of Moore Hall near the chimneys. He said he had put them there handy for cleaning flues. He spoke with horror of the abuses he had seen as a boy — little naked boys used as chimney sweeps — forced up these narrow twisty flues and if they didn't or couldn't force their way up to the top and stick a broom out, their masters would build a fire below to speed them up (like Kingsley's story *Water Babies*). . . .

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